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**ELEMENTS  
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE,**

INTRODUCTORY TO  
USEFUL BOOKS IN THE PRINCIPAL BRANCHES  
OF  
LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

DESIGNED CHIEFLY FOR THE JUNIOR STUDENTS IN  
THE UNIVERSITIES, AND THE HIGHER  
CLASSES IN SCHOOLS.

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BY HENRY KETT, B. D.  
FELLOW AND TUTOR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

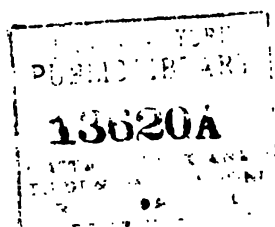
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BOSTON.

1803. ✓



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NEW YORK

## PREFACE.

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THE following work contains the substance of a Course of Lectures, which I have occasionally read to my pupils during the last twelve years. The satisfaction which they expressed on hearing them has encouraged me to hope, that they will not prove unacceptable to those, for whose use they are now made public.

To assert a claim to originality in such a work as this would perhaps only be equivalent to a confession of its demerit. My pretensions to public regard must depend in no small degree upon the manner in which I have clothed old ideas in a new dress, and upon my skill in compressing within a moderate compass the substance of large and voluminous works. Upon all my subjects I have endeavoured to reflect light from every quarter which my reading would afford. My references will show the sources from which I have derived my principal information; but it would be almost an endless, and perhaps a very ostentatious task, to enumerate all my literary obligations.

There are a few topics indeed, with respect to which I think I may be allowed to assert some claims to novelty. For many of my remarks on *the Greek Language* I am indebted principally to my own observations upon its nature and comparative merits; the *History of Chivalry*, important as the influence of that



remarkable institution has been upon manners, is a subject upon which I have not been able to collect much information from English authors; and the *History of the Revival of Classical Learning*, although a topic of the strongest interest to every man of letters, has never been fully treated by any writer, with whose works I am acquainted.

Many of my *Quotations* are selected from such works, as, either from their size, number of volumes, or scarceness, do not frequently come within the reach of young men. If some of them are borrowed from more obvious and popular works, their peculiar beauty, strength, and appositeness, it is presumed, will justify their introduction. But elegant as my quotations may be in point of style, conclusive as to reasoning, or striking as to the impression they are calculated to make; they will not completely answer the intended purpose, if, while they raise a high opinion of the merit of their authors, they do not excite an eager curiosity to peruse more of their works.

If I should be fortunate enough to succeed in procuring for eminent writers any additional degree of regard; if I should excite a more ardent and more active attention to any branches of useful knowledge; and if the variety of my topics should contribute to diffuse more widely the light of general information and useful truth; I shall have the satisfaction to reflect that my time has not been sacrificed to a frivolous purpose by thus endeavouring, in conformity with the occupations of the most valuable portion of my life, to instruct the rising generation.

TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,

May 12, 1802.

**ADVERTISEMENT**  
**TO THE FOURTH EDITION**

The increasing demand for my work calls upon me for adequate endeavours to merit the public approbation. I have therefore revised the whole, and made some useful alterations and additions.

TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,  
May 20, 1803.

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**ADVERTISEMENT.**  
**TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.**

A few paragraphs and notes have been omitted in this edition, which seem to have been written for a particular purpose, but would not be useful or interesting to the American reader.

By the advice of competent judges the Appendix, containing a long list of books, has been omitted, because it would increase the size and price of the work, and would not be generally useful in this country. A considerable part of the list consists of Greek and Latin books, of which a complete account may be found in Dibdin's Introduction to the Classics, 8vo, or the Bibliographical Dictionary, 7 vols, 12mo. Both these works are said to have merit, and will be acceptable to those who desire to know the characters of the various editions of the Greek and Roman Classics. A list of

the best professional books can always be obtained from professors and professional men.

A few paragraphs have been supplied in the second volume from books of merit.

The publishers have no intention to bestow indiscriminate praise upon this work. They know that it contains some imperfections. But still they believe that it will be useful to the generality of readers, and especially to those who are designed for business, and have not received what is commonly termed a liberal education. It will be useful to all as an outline or plan of study, which may be more conveniently prosecuted by the assistance of such a guide.

Few books have been so favourably received in Britain as this, five editions having been published from May 12, 1802, to some time in 1803. This edition is printed from the fifth English edition.

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Levia quidem hæc, et parvi forte si per se spectentur momenti;  
sed ex ELEMENTIS constant, ex principiis oriuntur omnia; et  
ex judicii consuetudine in rebus minutis adhibita, pendet scopis-  
simè etiam in maximis vera atque accurata Scientia.

CLARKE PRAEF. IN ILIAD.

TO separate some of the most useful and the most beautiful parts from the great mass of human knowledge; to arrange them in such regular order, that they may be inspected with ease, and varied at pleasure; and to recommend them to the careful examination of young men who are studiously disposed, constitute the design of the author of this work.

It is likewise his object to make the most useful topics of literature familiar and easy to general readers, who have not had the advantage of a learned education.

The more he reflects upon the PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY, the VARIOUS FACULTIES of the mind, and the GREAT ADVANTAGES which arise from acquiring an AMPLE FUND OF VALUABLE IDEAS, the more he is convinced of the utility of engaging in the pursuit of general knowledge, *as far as may be consistent with professional views, and particular situations in life.*

The custom has prevailed of late years, much more than it did formerly, of introducing young men at an

early age into the mixed company of persons older than themselves. As such is the reigning mode, they ought to be prepared in some degree at least to blend manly and serious topics with the sallies of light and gay conversation. And, in order to be qualified for the introduction of such subjects, it seems requisite to unite to the study of the learned languages other attainments, which have a reference to the sciences, the works of nature, and the affairs of active life.

The improvements of the times have turned the attention of the learned to new pursuits, and given their conduct a new direction. The scholar, no longer confined within the walls of a College, as was formerly the case, now mixes in general society, and adapts his studies to an enlarged sphere of observation: he does not limit his reading to the works of the ancients, or to his professional researches alone; but shows his proficiency in the various parts of literature, which are interesting to the world at large.

The condition of social intercourse among those who have had the advantages of a liberal education, is at present so happily improved, that a free communication subsists between all intelligent and well-informed men. The Divine, the Physician, the Barrister, the Artist, and the Merchant, associate without reserve, and augment the pleasure they derive from conversation, in proportion as they obtain an insight into various pursuits and occupations. The more ideas they acquire in common, the sooner their prejudices are removed, a more perfect congeniality of opinion prevails, they rise higher in each other's estimation, and the pleasure of society is ripened into the sentiments of attachment and friendship. In such parties, where the "*feast of reason and the flow of soul*" prevail with the

happiest effect, he who unites to knowledge of the world, the leading ideas and rational principles which well-chosen books can supply, will render himself the most acceptable, and the most valuable companion.

Such are now the abundant productions of the press, that books written in our own language upon all subjects whatever are constantly published, and quickly circulate through the whole kingdom. This circumstance has lessened that wide and very evident distinction, which in former times prevailed between the learned and the unlearned classes of the community. At present, they who have not enjoyed the benefit of a classical education may reap many of the fruits of learning without the labour of cultivation, as translations furnish them with convenient and easy expedients, which can in some measure, although an incomplete one, make amends for their ignorance of the original authors. And upon all subjects of general Literature, Science, and Taste, in their actual and most highly improved state, they have the same means of information in their power with those who have been regularly educated in the Universities, and the public schools.

Thus favourable are the temper and the circumstances of the times to the diffusion of knowledge. And if the most mature and deliberate decisions of reflection and experience be required to give weight to the opinion, that comprehensive views of learning and science are calculated to produce the best effects upon the mind, reference can be made to both ancient and modern authorities—to writers of no less eminence than Quintilian, Milton, and Locke. Their observations tend to prove, that close attention to a professional study is an affair of the first importance, but that invariable and exclusive application to any one pursuit

is the certain mark of a contracted education. For hence the student is led to form a dislike to occupations dissimilar to his own, and to entertain prejudices against those who exercise them. He is liable to view mankind and their employments through a wrong and a discoloured medium, and to make imperfect, if not false estimates of their use and value. In order to prevent such contractedness of disposition, and such errors of judgment, what method can be more efficacious, than to open some of the gates of general knowledge, and display its most beautiful prospects to his view?

Such prospects, distinctly and deliberately surveyed, will produce the most beneficial effects upon his temper and opinions. While they place before him the means of increasing his information, they will render him a more correct judge of its value, and secure him from conceit, affectation, and pedantry. They will render him more capable of appreciating the relative importance and comparative merit of different studies, when referred to the use and ornament of life. He will discern the natural affinity which subsists between the different branches of polite literature, and how capable they are of increasing the influence, and improving the beauties of each other. In short, various pursuits, skilfully chosen and assiduously followed, can give proper activity to every faculty of the mind, inasmuch as they engage the judgment, the memory, and the imagination, in an agreeable exercise, and are associated for one beneficial purpose—like the genial drops of rain, which descend from heaven, they unite in one common stream to strengthen and enlarge the current of knowledge.

By studies thus diversified the mind is supplied with copious materials for the serious reflexions of re-

tiement, or the lively intercourse of society; it is enabled, by the combination of many particular ideas, to form those general principles, which it is always eager to embrace, which are of great use in the conduct of life, and may prove in every situation pleasing and advantageous. In short, such a plan is calculated to disseminate that knowledge, which is adapted to the present improved state of society, to divest learning of pedantry, and to afford the scholar some insight into the researches of the philosopher, the occupations of the man of business, and the pleasures of the man of taste.

And as the arts and sciences bestow mutual assistance, and reflect mutual light, so are they highly efficacious and beneficial when combined with professional knowledge. To some professions indeed they are essentially necessary, to all they are ornamental. They afford illustrations which render professional studies more easy to be understood, and they furnish supplies which are conducive to their complete success.

Every one must allow, that all systems of education, if constituted upon right principles, should be well adapted to the situations of those, for whose service they are intended. In selecting the topics of the following work, I have therefore considered young men, with a view to their most important relations in life, as CHRISTIANS, as STUDENTS, and as MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, the welfare and prosperity of which depend upon the usefulness of their attainments, and the respectability of their conduct.

It is evident from general observation, that the principles of religion are congenial with the mind of man: for even among tribes the most barbarous and uncivilized, whether we explore the wilds of Africa, or the shores of the Pacific Ocean, where the capacities of

the inhabitants are narrow and limited, and very few virtues are remarked to expand and flourish; some traces of religion, some notions of an Omnipotent and Over-ruling Power, darkened as they may be by gross superstition, are still found to prevail. And even in the civilized country of France, where the impious abettors of the Revolution proceeded so far as to insult the reason of an enlightened people, by compelling them to abjure their faith in their Creator and their Redeemer, how difficult has it been found to produce even external conformity to their decrees; and with what ardour are the people returning to the open profession of Christianity, now their rulers are fully aware of the expediency of its revival and public exercise! It appears therefore, that to inculcate those principles of religious duty, which the mind naturally invites, and to improve its capacity for the reception of the most sublime truths, is no more than a just attention and due obedience to the voice of nature.

And as the truth of Christianity is founded upon the strongest arguments, and unites in the closest union our public and private, our temporal and eternal happiness, it justly forms the ground-work of education. The attributes of the great Creator—his power as the author, and his goodness as the governor of the universe—the bright image of the Saviour of the world, as represented by the holy Evangelists—his actions marked by the purest benevolence, his precepts tending immediately to the happiness of man, and his promises capable of exciting the most exalted and most glorious hopes, are peculiarly calculated to strike the imagination, and interest the sensibility of youth. Such sublime topics, inculcated upon right principles, cannot fail to encourage those ardent sentiments of

love, gratitude, and veneration, which are natural to susceptible and tender minds. Since therefore the same principles which are congenial with the dispositions of young men are most conducive to their happiness; since, in short, the evidences of CHRISTIANITY are miraculous;—since it is an express revelation of the will of God, and as such we can have no pretence to reject its proofs, and no right to resist its claims to our observance; it must be unquestionably a subject of transcendent importance, and therefore stands as the *first* and *leading* topic of my work.

As the knowledge of LANGUAGE is intimately connected with every other kind of information, and as in the languages of ancient GREECE and ROME are preserved some of the noblest productions of human genius, I assign to these subjects the next place.

In recommendation of OUR OWN LANGUAGE it is superfluous to have recourse to arguments. All who are acquainted with it, foreigners as well as natives, must be convinced of its excellence, particularly as it is the vehicle of productions eminently distinguished by genius, taste, learning, and science.

And as language should be considered not merely as a channel to convey our thoughts upon common occasions, but as capable of ornament to please, and of energy to persuade mankind; and as such improvements are both gratifying and beneficial to society, proper attention is due to the study of ELOQUENCE.

Cicero, the most celebrated of Roman orators, has very justly remarked, that ignorance of the events and transactions of former times condemns us to a perpetual state of childhood: from this condition of mental darkness we are rescued by HISTORY, which supplies us with its friendly light to view the instructive events



of past ages, and to collect wisdom from the conduct of others. And as there are particular countries, from which we have derived the most important information in religion, in arts, in sciences, and in literature, we ought carefully to inspect the pages of their interesting records.

The most ancient people, of whom we have any authentic accounts, are the Jews: to them was communicated, and by them was preserved, the knowledge of the true God; while all other nations were sunk in the most abject superstition, and disgraced by the grossest idolatry.

The writers of GREECE and ROME have recorded such numerous and such eminent instances of the genius, valour, and wisdom of their countrymen, as have been the just subjects of admiration for all succeeding ages; for which reason the accounts of THEIR MEMORABLE TRANSACTIONS ought to be carefully inspected before we proceed to survey the HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE, and OF OUR NATIVE COUNTRY.

As reason is the noblest faculty of the human mind, it is of the highest importance to consider its proper employment, more especially as upon its co-operation with religion in controlling the flights of the imagination, and abating the violence of the passions, depends the happiness of life. That system of LOGIC, therefore, which consists not in abstruse terms, or argumentative subtlety, but in the manly exercise of the rational powers, justly claims an important place in every system of education.

The various discoveries and improvements in SCIENCE and PHILOSOPHY constitute a peculiar distinction between ancient and modern times. Problems of science, like the arguments of logic, employ the mind in

the most vigorous exercise of its powers, and confirm the habits of close application, which are essentially necessary in the prosecution of every kind of study. Such are the reasons for introducing and recommending due attention to the principles of the MATHEMATICS.

The human mind, not content with speculations upon the properties of matter alone, delights to survey the wonderful works of the GREAT CREATOR, as displayed in the various parts of the universe. This employment is a source of never-failing satisfaction to persons of every age. The productions of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms are closely connected with the well-being, and are conducive to the subsistence of man; so that NATURAL HISTORY claims his particular attention.

And as the elegant Arts possess a pleasing influence over the imagination, and furnish a constant variety of amusement and pleasure, it is highly desirable to examine the principles, and consider the application of a refined and correct taste to the beauties of PAINTING, POETRY, and MUSIC.

In the welfare and prosperity of his native country every Briton is deeply interested. The two great sources of its support, its opulence, and its glory, are AGRICULTURE and COMMERCE; to have a knowledge of their leading principles must be allowed to be singularly useful to an English gentleman.

Since it is a prevailing fashion, particularly among the higher ranks of society, to complete the course of education by visiting foreign countries, it is useful to ascertain the advantages, which may be derived from the practice of TRAVELLING.

As attainments derive their greatest value from being directed to the purposes of active life, the qualifica-

tions requisite for a right conduct in the learned professions of LAW, PHYSIC, and DIVINITY, are taken into consideration.

And lastly, to point out the sources, from which the reader may draw more complete information upon all the preceding subjects, the work is closed with lists of **THE MOST APPROVED AND INSTRUCTIVE BOOKS.**

The *order* in which my *chapters* are disposed, is adapted to the progress of the faculties of the mind, from childhood to riper years. The principles of religion, of language, and of history, are first presented to my readers; and the elements of science, natural history, and taste, together with the various studies, which relate to the active scenes of life, close the volumes of knowledge. The foundation of the building is deeply laid, and composed of the most solid materials; the superstructure, raised to a proper elevation, displays ornament, while it is adapted to convenience.

Such is the sketch of my design, in which it is intended to trace the regular progress of application, from puerile to manly studies—from elementary knowledge to professional duties. It is sufficiently finished to shew, that the fields of instruction are not only fertile, but the most various in their productions. Some spots bring forth the immortal fruits of religion, some the hardy plants of science, and some the delicate flowers of taste. Here then the active temper of youth, and their fondness for change, may find ample means of gratification, wherever they choose to wander and expatiate. Light pursuits may divert, after severe studies have fatigued the mind; and he who has been diligent to peruse the records of history, to solve the problems of science, or ascertain the distinctions of logic, may find an agreeable relaxation in surveying

the beauties of nature, charming his ear with the delightful strains of music, pleasing his eye with the fair creations of the pencil, or delighting his fancy with the fictions of poetry.

I consider myself as assuming the office of a guide to the youthful and inexperienced traveller, and as undertaking to point out the interesting prospects of a charming country, without aspiring to the accuracy of a topographer, or the diligence of an antiquarian. I shall conduct him, who commits himself to my directions, from a low and narrow valley, where ~~his~~ views have been closely confined, to the summit of a lofty mountain:—when he has reached the proper point of view, he will feel his faculties expand, he will breathe a purer air, enjoy a wider horizon, and observe woods, lakes, mountains, plains, and rivers, spreading beneath his feet in a delightful prospect. From this commanding eminence, I shall point out such places as are most deserving his researches; and finally, I shall recommend him to those, who will prove more instructive, and more pleasing companions, through the remaining part of his journey.

## CLASS THE FIRST.

### RELIGION.

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#### CHAPTER I.

### THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE seeds of religious knowledge are implanted in our minds during the earliest period of our lives. The notions of Providence, and the various duties which we owe both to God and to mankind, are inculcated long before our judgments are sufficiently matured to determine the reasonableness, or estimate the utility, of moral and religious truth.

That the conduct of the instructors of children, in thus taking advantage of the curiosity and the pliability of the infant mind, is not the result of superstition and credulity, but of good sense, and a proper regard to its best interests, and most valuable improvement, will appear, when the power of judgment is sufficiently strengthened by time to enable a young man to examine those principles, which he has been taught from his early years to hold venerable and sacred. To inquire on what account Christianity claims an ascendancy over all other branches of knowledge, and what are the particular grounds upon which he believes it to be a divine Revelation, is a duty which he owes equally to his own reason, and to the dignity and importance of the subject itself.

“Revelation claims to be the voice of God, and our obligation to attend to his voice is surely moral in all cases. And as it is insisted that its evidence is conclusive, upon thorough consideration of it; so it offers itself to us with manifest obvious appearances of having something more than human in it, and therefore in all reason requires to have its claims most seriously examined into.” Butler's Analogy, p. 401.

Such an examination, conducted with that degree of care and attention, becoming the infinite importance of the subject, will clearly prove that the Christian Religion constitutes the most useful and the most transcendent part of our knowledge. It introduces us to an acquaintance with those subjects, which are in the highest degree desirable to be known; as it opens the clearest prospect, that man in his present state can survey, of that Being, who is the essence of all perfection, the centre of infinite excellence, and the fountain of inexhaustible wisdom, goodness, and power. The knowledge of created beings is low and trivial when compared to this; for however admirable they may be in their construction, however useful in their nature and properties, and however stupendous in their frame and magnitude, they are still but faint shadows and imperfect images of the glory of their Creator. The instruction, which the Christian Religion conveys, is not only of the most excellent kind, but its acquisition is above all things to be desired, especially when we consider the Almighty, with respect to the wonders of his power, and the dispensation of his Providence—when we view him by the clear light of the Christian Revelation, not only as the Maker and Governor of the universe, but as the Father of the Saviour

of the world, whom he commissioned to proclaim his divine will, to establish the certainty of a future state, and to propose everlasting happiness to mankind, on condition of faith in a Redeemer, and obedience to his commands.

To know Christianity is therefore both to understand what the Supreme Being has revealed for our greatest good, and to ascertain what conduct we ought to pursue in order to obtain his approbation and favour. How low therefore must the acquirements of learning and science sink in our opinion, when placed in opposition to religious knowledge! But when it forms the basis, upon which they are built, they derive additional value as well as stability from its support; they are consecrated to the best purposes, and directed to their most salutary ends. Much as the knowledge of the scholar, and the speculations of the philosopher may elevate and enlarge the mind, and much as they may improve and adorn it, they extend not our prospects beyond the world, they bound our views within the narrow limits of human life. But the knowledge of a Christian takes a more exalted and a more certain aim; it respects a degree of felicity, which exceeds our utmost powers of conception, and a situation of pleasure and delight without alloy, and without end—It relates to a state of existence, when the spirits of the just will be made perfect, and the transcendent bliss of angels will be imparted to glorified and immortal man.

Such being the excellence of Christianity, and such the important end, which it proposes, every person, who desires to be fully acquainted with divine truth, and to build his happiness upon the most solid basis, will take, with the greatest satisfaction, a particular and distinct view of its nature and evidences. Then

will he avoid the imputation of being a Christian merely in compliance with the prejudices of his parents, or the customs of his native country; and he will become one in consequence of a rational preference, and a proper examination.\* His conviction of its truth will then be solid and clear; he will plainly perceive the strength of its foundations, and fully understand the extent of its advantages: he will be persuaded that it bears the character and stamp of *divinity*, and that it has every claim to the reception of mankind, which a divine Revelation can *reasonably* be expected to possess.

The proofs of the truth of the Christian Revelation are numerous, clear, and conclusive. The most obvious and striking are those which arise; I. From the

\* "Were a man designed only, like a flie, to buzz about here for a time, sucking in the air, and licking the dew, then soon to vanish back into nothing, or to be transformed into worms; how sorry and despicable a thing were he? And such, without religion, we should be. But it supplieth us with business of a most worthy nature, and lofty importance; it setteth us upon doing things great and noble as can be; it engageth us to free our minds from all fond conceits, and cleanse our hearts from all corrupt affections; to curb our brutish appetites, to tame our wild passions, to correct our perverse inclinations, to conform the dispositions of our Soul and the actions of our life to the eternal laws of righteousness and goodness: it putteth us upon the imitation of God, and aiming at the resemblance of his perfections; upon obtaining a friendship, and maintaining a correspondence with the High and Holy one; upon fitting our minds for conversation and society with the wisest and purest spirits above; upon providing for an immortal state; upon the acquist of joy and glory everlasting." Barrow's Sermons, vol. I. serm. iii. p. 36.

The happy effects that result from early religious instruction are described with his accustomed eloquence, by Dr. Parr, in his Discourse on Education. See p. 13, &c.



AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. II. THE CHARACTER OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR. III. THE PROPHECIES of which he was the subject, as well as those which he delivered. IV. HIS MIRACLES. V. THE SUBLIME MORALITY OF HIS PRECEPTS. And, VI. THE RAPID AND EXTENSIVE PROPAGATION OF HIS RELIGION under circumstances the most hostile to its advancement.

#### I. THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament is the source, from which the knowledge of the Christian system is derived. That the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles were written by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, neither Gentiles nor Jews have ever been so hardy as to deny. The second Epistle of St. Peter indeed, the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, the two Epistles of St. John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation of St. John, were not received at first by all the congregations of Christians. As soon however as their authenticity was made known, they were admitted into the Canon of Scripture. That the Gospels are the same in every article of the smallest importance, as they were when first published by their respective authors, there can be no doubt; as they have been preserved through every successive age with the greatest care. From the time of the Apostles to the present hour, even those sects of Christians, that have been the most at variance upon other points, have concurred in guarding them with equal diligence, and have held them in equal veneration. The proofs of their genuineness are more numerous than can be adduced in favour of any other ancient writings. Every relation of a fact

is marked by the most exact detail of names, persons, times, and places, that can in any degree throw light upon the subject, and establish its truth. The history, the manners, and the opinions of the times, as they may be collected from all other accounts, harmonize with the narratives of the sacred Writers, and corroborate their general veracity. The Evangelists were placed in situations the most favourable for obtaining complete and authentic information. St. Matthew and St. John, two of the disciples of our Lord, heard his divine instructions from his own mouth, beheld his astonishing miracles, and attended him during the whole course of his ministry. They drew their accounts from an intimate knowledge of persons, and a lively recollection of facts. St. Mark and St. Luke are entitled to all the credit of contemporary Biographers, as they were enabled to trace the truth to its source, in consequence of living in habits of the closest intimacy with those who had seen and conversed with our Lord. Few of those historians, whose works we most esteem, and whose fidelity we most respect, were so nearly connected with the subject of their writings, or possessed such ample means of genuine information. Any *one* of the Evangelists was perfectly well qualified to record the History of Christ, and to satisfy us as to its truth upon his own credit only; and *all* of them taken together, and combining their accumulated strength, form a body of evidence sufficient to remove the scruples of every candid mind, and to establish the truth upon a solid and lasting foundation.

We may assert with the most perfect confidence and truth, that so far from there being any traces extant of a History of Christ and his followers, contradictory to that of the Evangelists, there is not a contemporary, or a subsequent writer, whether Jewish or

Pagan, who adverts to the subject at all, who does not *confirm* the leading facts of the Gospel History.

The New Testament likewise contains Epistles written by the holy persons, who were engaged in preaching the Gospel immediately after the ascension of their divine Master. These Epistles refer continually to the original facts contained in the Gospels, and confirm their truth. A perfect harmony of design is evident both in the one and the other. They prescribe the same rule of faith. They inculcate the same articles to be believed, and the same precepts to be obeyed. They contain many striking references to the labours, which\* St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, underwent; and the peculiar energy and earnestness, with which he addressed his converts, have all the marks of seriousness and sincerity, which can give to any writings whatever the stamp of originality.† All these Epistles, when taken together, are not to be considered as composing a single evidence only, but as containing distinct and independent attestations of the truth of Christianity; for it is evident from their contents, that they were written by different persons, at various times, and upon various occasions. Even the little circumstances in

\* See the animated and affecting description of his sufferings, 2 Cor. xi. &c.

† The proofs of the genuineness of his Epistles deduced from remarkable coincidences, and close though not studied connection with the Gospel History, as well as from allusions to particular incidents, persons, times, and places, are stated by Dr. Paley, with great precision and clearness. See more particularly his *Horæ Paulinæ* p. 11, 14, 34, 169, 216, 312. A new argument in favour of the Epistles is drawn from the erroneous subscriptions to six of them, p. 380. He concludes with a short view of the external Evidence, p. 386, 403. And gives some striking remarks on the Talents, Character, and Conduct of St. Paul, p. 411.

which they differ from each other have their use, as they tend to prove that there was no plan preconcerted by the writers, with a view to excite wonder, and obtain credit by any studied uniformity of representation.

He who peruses the Gospels and Epistles with attention, must be struck by a *remarkable peculiarity* of narrative and argument, which runs through every part of them. There is no appearance of artifice or duplicity in the sacred Writers; no endeavour to raise the reputation of friends, or depreciate the characters of enemies. There is no effort made to reconcile the mind of the reader to what is marvellous in their narrative; no studied attempt to fire his imagination, or rouse his passions in their cause. All is fair, temperate, and candid. Vain, it is true, were the search for those ornaments which distinguish the classical writers: but still in their works there is frequently a pleasing simplicity, and sometimes a sublimity of expression, although these beauties seem rather to rise naturally out of the subject, than to result from the labour of composition, or any choice or arrangement of words. One circumstance there is, in which the New Testament rises to an elevation, which no other book can reach. Here presides the majesty of *true and unsullied truth*, which shines in unadorned but awful state, and never turns aside to the blandishments of flattery, or listens to the whispers of prejudice, or defamation. Here alone she invariably supports the same dignified and uniform character, and points with equal impartiality to Peter now professing his unalterable fidelity, and now denying his Lord;—to the Apostles at one time deserting Christ, and at another, hazarding their lives by the bold profession of his Gospel. And these plain characters of truth afford the clearest

evidence of the inspiration of the sacred books. The Holy Spirit, whose assistance was promised to his disciples by their heavenly Master, guarded them from error in their narratives, in the statement of their precepts, and the developement of their doctrines. Upon such momentous points, as contribute to form an infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, they were guided by the divine wisdom, and thus are raised to a degree of authority and credibility unattainable by all other writers.\*

“It doth not appear, that ever it came into the mind of these writers, how this or the other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raised upon them. But without at all attending to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think, whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it; they tell the truth, and attend to nothing else. Surely this looks like sincerity, and that they published nothing to the world, but what they believed themselves.” Duchal, quoted by Paley, vol. ii. p. 182.

An inquiry into the authenticity of the books of the New Testament is of great importance. If they are as ancient as they are reputed to be; if they were certainly written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, and have all the requisite characters of genuineness, we may venture to assert with confidence, that the facts contained in them are undeniably and substantially true. For supposing such actions as have been attributed to Christ never to have been performed, so great must have been the effrontery, as well as the ingenuity of the fabricators of this imposture, if they proceeded to

\* See Gibson's *Pastoral Letters in the Enchiridion Theologicum*, vol. iv. p. 235.

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publish as true what they knew to be false, as to exceed the bounds of belief: and if, even for the sake of argument only, we suppose them to have combined in a confederacy for such a purpose, what would have been the consequence? They would only have given the desired advantage to their acute, active, and implacable enemies, who would quickly have detected the falsehood, sacrificed the abettors of it to their just indignation, and stigmatized the Christian Religion forever as an imposture and a fable.

In the preservation of the New Testament, we may observe a very striking instance of the superintendence of divine Providence, ever watchful for the happiness of mankind. Notwithstanding the various dissensions which have continued to prevail in the Christian Church, ever since its first establishment, the Books containing the principles of the Religion itself, are come down to us who live at the distance of nearly eighteen centuries from the time of their Authors, in a pure and unadulterated condition: so that whenever the Christian faith has been corrupted, its deviation from a state of purity could always be detected by an appeal to the most indisputable authority. Nor has the stream of time merely conveyed to us this divine treasure, uninjured and secure; but even in the midst of the most violent persecutions, and the darkest superstition, the Christian faith has been so protected by divine care, that it has never been wholly lost to the world. The spark of heavenly fire, although it has been covered by the ashes of Error, has still remained alive, and although in the obscure ages, previous to the Reformation, its light could be with difficulty discerned, yet it was always accessible to those, who wished to fan it into a flame.

## II. THE CHARACTER OF OUR LORD.

This character, as represented in the plain energetic narratives of the Evangelists, is marked qualities the most extraordinary, and the most transcendent. Every description of every other person, whether embellished by the fancy of the poet, portrayed by the accuracy of the historian, leave evidently without an equal, in the annals of mankind.

If the conduct of those who bear a resemblance to Christ as the founders of religious establishments examined, these assertions will receive the fullest confirmation. They all accommodated their plans to human policy, and private interest—to existing tenets, superstition, and to prevailing habits of life. Christian Lawgiver, more sublime in his object, more pure in his motives, aimed at no recommendation of his precepts by courting the prejudices, or catering the passions of mankind. The institution of Numa the second king of the Romans, of Brahma Lawgiver of the various tribes of India, and of Confucius the great philosopher of China, were evidently adapted to the existing habits, and prevailing inclinations of their people. They seem indeed to have been founded altogether upon them. Mahomet, the great impostor of Arabia, accommodated the rules of the Koran, and the rewards of his paradise, to the manners and desires of a warlike and a sensual people. In his character and conduct he presented a striking contrast to Christ. Ambition and lust were the reigning passions of his soul. He maintained, that he received his Koran from heaven: but its frivolous and absurd contents sufficiently indicate the falsehood of his pretensions. With a degree of effrontery still r

impious, he pleaded a divine authority for the boundless gratification of his sensuality: and unable to appeal to miracles, which give the most certain proofs of a teacher sent from God, he extended his faith by force, and reared his bloody crescent amid captives, who were the victims of his passions, and cities that were desolated by his sword.\*

\* "Mahometanism is a borrowed system, made up for the most part of Judaism and Christianity, and, if it be considered in the most favourable view, might possibly be accounted a sort of Christian heresy. If the Gospel had never been preached, it may be questioned whether Mahometanism would have existed. Its author was an ignorant knave and a fanatic, who had neither skill nor genius to form a religion out of his own head." Jortin's Sermons, vol. vii, p. 369.

See Paley's Evidences, vol. iii, p. 70, sect. ii. Taylor's Moral Demonstrations, vol. ii, p. 383, and Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.

The contrast between our Lord and the Prophet of Arabia is drawn in a style of such rich and appropriate eloquence by Sherlock, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of presenting it to my readers.

"Make the appeal to natural religion, or, which is the same thing, to the reason of man. Set before her Mahomet, and his disciples, arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands and tens of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword. Shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements; shew her the prophet's chamber, his wives and concubines; let her see his adulteries, and hear him allege revelation and his divine commission to justify his lust and oppression. When she is tired with this scene, then shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek; doing good to all the souls of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies; let her follow him to the mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to his God. Carry her to



In the character of Christ we behold the most complete and prompt resignation to the will of God. So pure and so perfect was the whole tenor of his conduct, as to defy calumny, although it excited jealousy, and inflamed malice. His most bitter and inveterate enemies, even when suborned to be his public accusers, could not make good a single charge against his moral character. He was equally free from the ambition of an impostor, and the infatuation of an enthusiast; for when the people sought to place the crown of Israel on his head, he conveyed himself away by a miracle. Whenever he condescended to discourse upon any important point, or to answer any objections of his adversaries, he overcame their opposition with the irresistible power of truth, and his words were the words of unerring wisdom. Upon all occasions he displayed the soundness and moderation of calm judgment, and the steadiness of heroic intrepidity. There was no wild enthusiasm in his devotions, no rigid austerity in his conduct, no frivolous subtlety or intemperate vehemence in his arguments. Of the virtues, which adorned his mind, and gave a resistless grace and loveliness to every action of his life, humility,

his table, to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured, but not provoked. Let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to the cross, and let her view him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*—When natural religion hath viewed both, ask her, which is the prophet of God?—But her answer, we have already heard, when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross; by him she spoke and said, *Truly this was the Son of God.*" Sherlock's Ninth Discourse, vol. i.

patience, and the most ardent and universal love of mankind, were, upon every occasion, predominant. The perfect benevolence of his character, indeed, is fully evinced by the tendency of his miracles, which, far from being prejudicial and vindictive, were directed to some beneficial end. His courage was equally remote from ostentation and from rashness, and his meekness and condescension never make him appear abject. Tried by the greatest afflictions of life, assailed by hunger, exposed to poverty, deserted by his friends, and condemned to suffer an ignominious death, he is never degraded; the greatness of his character is in no respect diminished—he preserves the same air of mildness and dignity, and appears in the same highly venerable light as the Saviour of the world, who submits to an ignoble station, and conceals his majesty in an humble garb, for the most important purposes. It is thus the glorious prospects of nature are sometimes enveloped in the mists of the morning; or the great luminary of day is deprived of his beams and his brightness, by the temporary darkness of an eclipse.

And here let us pause to admire the *manner* in which this most sublime of all characters is introduced to us. We are not left to form an idea of it from vague accounts or loose penegyric, but from actions and events; and this circumstance proves undeniably the veracity of the Biographers of our Lord. The qualities of his mind are displayed by a detail of actions, the more striking as they are more exact. All his actions are left to recommend themselves by their own intrinsic merit, to captivate by their unaffected beauty, and to shine by their native lustre. The Evangelists have no where professedly drawn an elaborate or

highly finished character of the Saviour of the world. We are not told in a vague and indefinite manner, that he was eminently bountiful, compassionate, or wise. It is no where expressed in terms of general assertion, that he possessed the greatest virtues that can adorn and dignify the nature of man; or that he was endued with a power to controul, or to counteract the general laws of nature. But these inferences we are fully enabled to draw from regular statements of facts. We learn from lively and affecting anecdotes distinctly and circumstantially related, among many other astonishing instances of his divine power, that with a portion of food, the most disproportionate to their wants, he satisfied the hungry multitudes in the wilderness, that he calmed the violence of a storm at a word, and raised the son of the widow to life. Mat. xiv. Mark. iv. Luke vii.

Ignorant and illiterate as the Evangelists were, they have drawn a character superior to any that is elsewhere to be met with in the history of mankind. This character they were no less unable than unwilling to invent: the only method of solving this difficulty is to acknowledge that they wrote from the immediate impressions of reality. They saw, they conversed with the Saviour of mankind, and heard from his sacred lips the words of eternal life. They felt the power of truth upon their minds, and they exhibited it with proportionable clearness and strength. To state well-known facts, and record the lessons of divine Revelation, were the great objects of their labours. Hence they were consistent as well as circumstantial and accurate; and their uniformity of representation is an additional proof of the *reality* of the person described, as their divine Master. Every particular is in-

troduced in an artless and undesigning manner; and this circumstance itself, of not bringing our Lord forward in an ostentatious point of view, affords a remarkable evidence to confirm the truth of the Gospels. To complete the perfection of his character, his conduct was the exact counterpart of his instructions. He presented to the world that lively image of moral perfection which had indeed filled and elevated the imagination of Plato and Cicero; but which they as well as all other ancient philosophers in the widest circle of their observation had sought for in vain.\* The heavenly Teacher not only spoke as never man spoke, with respect to the sublime lessons, which he taught, the lively images, by which he illustrated, and the awful and impressive manner, in which he inculcated them; but at once to combine the efficacy of example with the perfection of precept, became the unerring guide to all that was pious, all that was good, and all that was truly and intrinsically great.

Preserving the same character of dignity blended with mildness and affability, he accommodated himself to persons of every rank and condition. Among the wise and the learned, the Doctors of the Sanhedrim, the haughty Pharisees, and the sceptical Sadducees, how does he shine in detecting their malice, confuting their cavils against his conduct and precepts, and establishing clear and useful truths! Among the publicans and sinners, how does he disseminate the purest morality without unnecessary harshness! Among the low and illiterate, the fishermen of Gallilee and the populace of Jerusalem, how does he condescend to their

\* *Formam quidem ipsam, et tanquam faciem honesti vides; quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plato, exciteret sapientiæ. Cicero de Officiis.*

contracted understandings, and adapt his precepts to their habits of life. Even women and children, because considered as capable of that instruction which leads to eternal happiness, are particularly regarded by the universal Teacher of Mankind. *Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children*, was his benign address, when he wished to turn their attention from his own sufferings to the impending woes of their country. *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven*. In this various accommodation to high and low, young and old, can we be inattentive to a quality of our Saviour's mind, which is peculiarly calculated to attach every feeling heart to his service—do we not remark that he was as *amiable*, as he was great and wise?

He who reflects with due attention and reverence upon the dignity, purity, and holiness of this divine character, will be sensible of the great difficulty of doing justice to the subject, as the Saviour of the world is presented to our observation in a manner so peculiarly striking. The inspired Apostles and Evangelists can alone satisfy our inquiries concerning him; and every other writer, conscious of his own incapacity to conceive, and his want of eloquence to describe such unparalleled excellence, must point to the lively and expressive portrait, which they alone, who saw the original, were qualified to draw.

It is reasonable to expect that so extraordinary a personage, distinguished as he was by every moral and intellectual quality, must necessarily make his testimony concerning himself perfectly credible. The positive and direct proofs of his divine mission are equally founded upon the prophecies, which foretold the most remarkable circumstances of his birth, life, and death,

and upon the miracles by which he proved to demonstration, that he was the promised Messiah of the Jews, the Mediator of a new covenant between God and man, and a divine Teacher sent to reform and save a guilty world.

### III. THE PROPHECIES.

The Old Testament contains a long series of predictions, which are expressed with greater distinctness, and marked with a more striking and appropriate reference to a particular train of events, in proportion as the prophets approached more nearly to the time of the Messiah. As he was the great object of the general expectation of the Jews, so was he the great end of the Prophecies. Sometimes he is pourtrayed as the innocent, patient, and unrepining sufferer, pierced with grief, and sinking under unmerited calamity for the sake of mankind; *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, who hath borne our sorrows, and was wounded for our transgressions* (Isaiah liii.); and sometimes, with all the fervour and vivid colours of Oriental poetry, are described his temporal grandeur, the transcendent attributes of his divine character, and the glory and eternity of his kingdom. *His name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace* (Isaiah ix, 6.). These surprising intimations that occur in the Prophets of various ages, like rays of light proceeding from different quarters, all meet in the same point, and illuminate the same object. Here is none of that latitude of interpretation, or ambiguity of expression, in which the oracles of the heathens were conveyed. The history of Christ, as related by the Evangelists, may be considered as an enlarged and

finished copy of the Prophecies, and the Prophecies themselves as the original sketches. The proportions and the outlines are uniformly preserved, and faithfully delineated. The colours indeed are more distinct and glowing, the figures have their just animation, but still their character and expression are the same.\* Ineffectual have been the endeavours of the Jews to pervert the true meaning of these Prophecies; their literal sense is peculiarly applicable to our Lord, and to him alone they must necessarily be referred. Without mistaking their object, or perverting their clear and obvious sense, they cannot be applied to any other person whatever. Whilst these predictions strike the mind of an attentive reader of Scripture, with various degrees of evidence, there are some of them which cannot fail to impress him with the fullest conviction, as they immediately relate to the mission, miracles, and character, as well as the exact time of the coming of Christ. Isaiah and Daniel more especially seem rather to describe the past as Historians, than to anticipate the future as Prophets. We know, from the authority of Scripture, that multitudes of Jews, who had diligently studied the Prophecies from their youth, and acknowledged their divine authority, felt the force of their application to our Lord, and were converted to his religion. And not to appeal to other instances,

\* *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacre*, book ii, ch. v, &c. *Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii, p. 67. *Grotius de Veritate*, lib. v, c. 17, 18. *Gibson's Pastoral Letters*, vol. iv, p. 52, of the *Enchiridion Theologicum*. *Jortin's Remarks*, vol. i, p. 73, 74. *Prideaux's Connections* vol. ii, p. 161. *Josephus de Bello Judaico*, lib. vi, c. 4, sect. 5, 6, 7, 8, compared with the predictions that relate to the Temple, as recorded by the Evangelists.

we also know that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, so circumstantially descriptive of the suffering Messiah, effected the conversion of the Eunuch of Ethiopia, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and contributed greatly to produce a conviction of the truth of Christianity in the mind of the profligate Lord Rochester.\*

The books, which contain these Prophecies, have been most carefully preserved even by the enemies of Christianity. Such are the Jews, whose religious belief is founded upon an acknowledgment of the divine inspiration of the Prophets. Hence they are undesignedly the supporters of that faith, to which they are confessedly hostile. A wide difference of opinion has prevailed among them in various ages; for their interpretations of the Prophets, before the coming of the Messiah, agreed much better with those of the Christians, than any they have given since the establishment of Christianity. And it is very much to the purpose repeatedly to take notice, that whatever construction they have put upon the *words* of the Prophecies, they have never raised any doubt, or brought any arguments to invalidate their *authenticity*.

As the divine mission of Christ received such support from the Prophecies, of which he was the sub-

\* This fact is recorded by Bishop Burnet. "To him Lord Rochester laid open with great freedom the tenor of his opinions, and the course of his life, and from him he received such conviction of the reasonableness of moral duty, and the truth of Christianity, as produced a total change both of his manners and opinions. The account of those salutary conferences is given by Burnet in a book, intituled, *Some passages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester*; which the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety." *Johnson's Life of Rochester*, vol. iv, p. 6, 12mo.



ject; so it is very strongly confirmed by those events, which he foresaw and foretold. He clearly described the *manner* of his own death, with many particular circumstances—the *place* where it was ordained to happen—the *treacherous method* by which he was to be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish governors, and given up to the Roman power—the *cruel and unbecoming treatment* he was to suffer, and the *exact period* of time that should elapse from his death to his resurrection. Such was precisely the train of events, as they are related at large by the Evangelists, and as those events were attested by the full acknowledgment and confession of the first martyrs, who sealed their belief with their blood. The Saviour of mankind speaks of future events without hesitation, not as things merely probable, but absolutely certain. He does not shadow them out in vague and ambiguous terms; but marks them in their rise, progress, and effects, in the clearest and most circumstantial descriptions. The interval between the prediction and its accomplishment, seems in his view to be annihilated; his penetrating mind pierces the veil of futurity, and the distant allusions of the Prophet are converted into the clear prospect of the spectator. Even at the time when Judea was in complete subjection to the Roman power, when a strong garrison kept its capital in awe, and rebellion against their conquerors, who had at that time the empire of the world, appeared as improbable as it was fruitless; he deplored the fall of the holy city, and pointed out the advance of the Roman standard, as the token of desolation, and the signal for his followers to save themselves, by flight, from captivity and destruction. At the time too when the temple of Jerusalem was held in the highest veneration;

ion by all foreigners, as well as Jews, what were the immediate observations of our Lord, when his disciples directed his attention, in terms of wonder and astonishment, to the vast and solid materials, of which that magnificent edifice was built? He lamented its approaching fall, and declared in explicit terms, that so complete should be its demolition, that not *one stone should be left upon another*. At a time likewise when the number of his followers was limited to a few fishermen of Galilee, and when he seemed destitute of every means to accomplish his purpose, he predicted the wide diffusion of the faith, and expressly proclaimed, that before the threatened calamities overwhelmed the Jews, and subverted their empire, his gospel should be preached among all nations.\*

The events, which happened about thirty years after the ascension of our Lord, completely verified these Prophecies. From the books of the New Testament, and particularly from the Acts of the Apostles, may be collected the fullest instances of the diligence and zeal with which the new religion was in a short time disseminated.

But Christians can appeal to an independent train of witnesses—to Jewish and to profane authors, for circumstantial accounts of the fulfilment of our Lord's predictions. The historian Josephus, descended from the family, which bore the sacred office of High Priest, a distinguished general in the early part of the last Jewish war, has given a particular and exact confirmation of every circumstance. With singular care he

\* See "History the Interpreter of Prophecy," 4th Edit. for the illustration of this subject at large; a work to which I refer with the less reserve, as the public have received it with approbation.

has avoided to mention the name of Christ, and yet with singular precision he has illustrated his predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem. The important service he has thus rendered to Christianity is wholly unintentional. What he relates is drawn from him by the power of irresistible truth, and is a testimony far stronger, and more unexceptionable, than an explicit mention of the name of Christ, and a laboured encomium on his words and actions.

The curious details of Josephus, in his History of the Wars of the Jews, are confirmed by Tacitus, Philostratus, and Dion Cassius. It is probable they were all of them unacquainted with the works of the Jewish Historian; and yet they corroborate his account, and all unite to illustrate the Prophecies of our Lord.

#### IV. THE MIRACLES OF OUR LORD.

The most illustrious evidence of the divine origin of Christianity, and that evidence to which its great Author most confidently appealed, when called upon to prove the authority of his mission, consisted in the exercise of miraculous powers. The miracles of Christ were so *frequent*, that they could not be the effects of chance; so *public*, that they could not be the contrivance of fraud and imposture; so *instantaneous*, that they could not result from any preconcerted scheme; and so beneficial in their immediate consequences, and so conducive to propagate the salutary truths he taught, that they could not proceed from the agency of evil spirits. They must therefore have been effected by the interposition of that divine power, to which Christ himself attributed them. Our Lord did not come according to the expectation of many of the Jews, as the conqueror

of their enemies, to display his policy in council, and his courage in the field: but he was invested with powers, that enabled him to triumph over the works of darkness, and suspend the laws of nature. The frequent and public exercise of those powers was essential to his character as a teacher sent from God, so that miracles were the fullest and most satisfactory credentials of his divine mission.\*

This divine Personage, whose manifestation to the world was preceded by such a regular train of prophecies; who instantaneously cured inveterate diseases, and at whose word even the dead arose; whose mind was adorned with consummate wisdom, and whose conduct was distinguished by every virtue; descended from heaven to deliver a perfect rule of faith and practice, and taught those important and indispensable lessons of duty, which are essentially necessary to the present and future happiness of mankind.

\* "The evidence of our Saviour's mission from heaven is so great, in the multitude of miracles he did, before all sorts of people (which the divine providence and wisdom has so ordered, that they never were, nor could be denied by any of the enemies and opposers of Christianity) that what he delivered cannot but be received as the oracles of God." Locke.

"Once believe that there is a God, and miracles are not incredible." Paley's *View*, vol. i. p. 13. vol. iii. p. 236—7, &c. Jortin's *Remarks*, vol. i. p. 259—267. Conybeare on the *Nature, Possibility, and Certainty of Miracles*. *Enchiridion Theologicum*, vol. iii. p. 153.

"All these miracles speak more goodness than power, and do not so much surprise the beholders, as touch their hearts." Bossuet, *Univ. Hist.* p. 253.

## V. CHRISTIAN ETHICS, OR THE PRECEPTS OF OUR LORD.

The precepts of Christianity form the most complete, most intelligible, and most useful system of Ethics, or moral philosophy. The standard of duty, which is set up in the Gospel, is agreeable to our natural notions of the Supreme Being, and is calculated to correct our errors, to exalt our affections, to purify our hearts, and enlighten our understandings. The motives, by which Christ enforces the practice of his laws, are consistent with the wisdom of the Almighty, and correspondent to the expectations of rational beings. He who duly weighs the *effects* of the Christian duties, and remarks how they contribute to restore man to the original dignity of his nature, will be led to conclude, that they form an indispensable part of a religion coming from God, because they are in every respect consistent with his wisdom, mercy, and goodness.

To view the moral part of the Christian dispensation in a proper light, it ought to be compared with the principles of ancient Philosophy. The sages of Greece and Rome undoubtedly present us with the most convincing proofs how far unenlightened reason could advance in the examination of moral obligation, and the discovery of the duties of man. But imperfection, if not error, was attached to all their systems.

If moral wisdom descended from heaven to dwell with Socrates, the most enlightened sage of the heathen world, she quickly caught the contagion of earthly depravity, and forgot her dignity so far as to bend at the shrine of superstition. Her dictates were not built upon any certain foundations, or digested into a consis-

tent plan. They were disgraced with false notions, intermixed with frivolous refinements, and scattered among discordant sects. Each sect of philosophers had a different idea of happiness, and a different mode of investigating truth.\* Every school was distinguished by its particular opinions; and the followers of Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle, exerted the powers of their minds, rather to display their ingenuity, than to satisfy the inquiries of mankind, as to the nature, the principles, and the end of moral obligation. The powerful influence of example, and the strong and awakening voice of some great and divine authority, were requisite to give to their instructions the energy of law. But the most material obstacle to a ready compliance with the dictates of heathen morality, was the want of such *sanc-tions* or confirmations by divine authority, as are calculated to hold the mind of man in constant obedience, by an immediate appeal to his hopes and fears—to his desire of future happiness, and his dread of future misery in a world to come.

And do we not find, that our holy Religion not only comprehends the best precepts of ancient philosophy in one regular system, but adds others which are peculiarly and eminently her own? Certainly. And this shews its high degree of perfection. To the Gospel of Christ we are indebted for those rules of conduct, which enjoin the sacrifice of self-interest, selfish pleasures, and vain-glory. By it alone we are taught in the most explicit language and in the most authoritative manner, to check all violent passions, and to cultivate the mild and pure affections of the heart, to forgive injuries, to love our enemies, to resist the

\* See Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 532. fol.

first impulse of evil desires, to practise humility and universal benevolence, and to prefer the joys of heaven to the pleasures and occupations of the world. Advancing to a degree of improvement far beyond the lessons of heathen morality, far beyond what was ever taught under the porches of Athens, or in the groves of the Academy; we are instructed to entertain the most awful veneration for the Deity, and to express the most lively gratitude for his mercies;— we are supported by the firmest reliance on his grace, and we are invited upon all occasions to resort in earnest and fervent prayers to his power, mercy, and goodness, for the supply of our numerous wants, for the pardon of our sins, for security in the midst of danger, and for support at the hour of death.

Having a perfect model of virtue in the conduct of our blessed Lord set before us, and a perfect rule of life proposed in his divine instructions, we are taught to expect that our sincere endeavours to conquer the difficulties we have to surmount in our journey through life will be aided by the divine assistance; and we are encouraged to hope that by our strenuous and unabated exertions, we may make a much nearer approach to that perfection of character, which reaches “the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ,” than it is possible for those to do, who act not upon Christian principles\*.

\* “The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest, by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest *perfection*.” Milton.

“And is it then possible that mortal man should in any sense attain unto *perfection*? Is it possible, that we who are born in

Consider the precepts of Christianity not by comparison only with other systems, but as furnishing a rule of life. Were the actions of mankind to be regulated by them, nothing would be wanting to render us happy. Peace and harmony would flourish in every part of the globe. There would be no injustice, no impiety, no fraud, no rapine, no reign of disorderly passions. Every one, satisfied with his lot, resigned to the divine will, and enjoying a full prospect of endless happiness, would pass his days in content and tranquillity, to which neither pain nor sorrow, nor even the fear of death, could ever give any long interruption. Man would renovate his primeval condition, and in his words

sin, and conceived in iniquity, who are brought forth in ignorance, and grow up in a multiplicity of errors; whose understandings are dark, our wills biassed, our passions strong, our affections corrupted, our appetites inordinate, our inclinations irregular—Is it possible, that we who are surrounded with things themselves obscure, with examples evil, with temptations numberless, as the variety of objects that encompass us—Is it possible, that we should make any progress towards arriving at perfection? With men indeed this must needs be impossible; but with God all things are possible. For when we consider on the other side, that we have a perfect rule, and an unerring instructor; an example complete as the divine life, and yet with all the condescensions of human infirmity; motives strong and powerful as the rewards of heaven, and pressing as the necessity of avoiding endless destruction; assistances mighty as the grace of God, and effectual as the continual guidance of the Spirit of truth; when we consider this, I say, we may then perhaps be as apt to wonder on the other hand, that all men are not perfect. And yet with all these advantages, the perfection, that the best men ever arrive to, is but in a figurative and very imperfect sense, with great allowances, and much diminution, with frequent defects, and many, very many limitations.” Clarke, Sermon cxliv. vol. ii. p 183. fol. edit.



and actions exhibit the purity of Paradise. That such a state, as far as the imperfection of human nature would allow, can exist, we trust that the lives of many Christians, not only of the primitive but of subsequent times, can attest. Surely such a system must be transcendent in excellence, and bears within itself the marks of a divine origin.\*

The revealed will of God is the proper source of moral obligation. It gives life and vigour to the performance of every duty, and without it all systems of morals are dry, uninteresting, and founded upon no fixed principle of action. How jejune and tedious are the Ethics of Aristotle, and the Offices of Cicero, the writings of Puffendorf and Grotius, of Whitby and Hutchinson, when compared with the short rules, illustrated by the most pleasing similes, and animated by the most striking examples, with which the Gospel of Christ abounds! His divine lessons touch the heart by the affecting combination of practice with theory, and even engage the passions on the side of virtue.

Men who are distinguished by great and extraordinary talents are remarked to have usually a peculiar

\* "From the New Testament may be collected a system of Ethics, in which every moral precept founded on reason is carried to a higher degree of purity and perfection, than in any other of the wisest philosophers of preceding ages; every moral precept founded on false principles is totally omitted, and many new precepts added peculiarly corresponding with the new object of this religion." Soame Jenyns, p. 9.

"In morality there are books enough writ both by ancient and modern philosophers; but the morality of the Gospel doth so exceed them all, that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I shall send him to no other book, but the New Testament." Locke on Reading and Study, vol. ii. p. 407.

mode of thinking and expression. Whoever examines the discourses of our Lord with care, will find in them a certain character which discriminates them from the lessons of all other moralists. His manner at once original and striking, clear and convincing, consists in deriving topics of instruction from objects and circumstances familiar to his hearers. He affects the passions, and improves the understanding through the medium of the senses. His public lessons to the people, and his private conversations to his disciples, allude perpetually to the *place* where he was, to the *surrounding* objects, the *season* of the year, or to the *occupations* and *circumstances* of those whom he addresses. When he exhorted his disciples to trust in Providence for the supply of their daily wants, he bade them behold the fowls of the air, which were then flying around them, and were fed by divine bounty, although they did not sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He desired them to observe the lilies of the field which were then blooming, and were beautifully clothed by the same power, and yet toiled not like the husbandman, whom they then saw at work. When the woman of Samaria was surprised at his asking her for water, he took occasion to represent his doctrine under the image of living water which flows from a spring. When he approached the temple, where sheep were kept in folds to be sold for the sacrifices, he spake in parables of the shepherd, the sheep, and the door of the sheep-fold. At the sight of little children, he repeatedly described the innocence and simplicity of true Christians. When he cured the man who was born blind, he immediately referred to himself, as the light of the world. He often alluded to the occupation of some of his disciples, whom he appointed fishers of

men. Knowing that Lazarus was dead, and should be raised again, he discoursed concerning the awful truths of the general resurrection, and of life eternal.\*

"Many writers upon the subject of moral philosophy divide too much the law of nature from the precepts of Revelation; which appears to me much the same defect, as if a commentator on the laws of England should content himself with stating upon each head the common law of the land, without taking any notice of acts of Parliament: or should choose to give his readers the common law in one book, and the statute law in another. When the obligations of morality are taught, (says Dr. Johnson in the Preface to the Preceptor) let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten; by which it will be shewn that they give strength and lustre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reason; and morality the will of God."†

From this view of the subject appears the excellence of the morality of the Gospel, and consequently how unnecessary it is to resort to any other scheme of Ethics for a rule of action. The various plans of duty, which have been formed exclusive of Christianity, seem not to propose any *motives* sufficiently cogent and permanent, to withhold men from the gratification of vicious desires, and the indulgence of violent passions. They must therefore give place to a more perfect law, which has the best claims to general reception, because

\* Jortin's Discourses, p. 229. Matt. vi, 26, 28. John iv, 10, x, 1. Mark ix, 37. John ix, 39. Matt. iv, 10, xiii, 47. John xi, 25. For some very pleasing remarks on our Lord's manner of teaching, see Dr. Townson's Discourses, p. 279.

† Paley's Preface to his Moral and Political Philosophy.

it is founded on the express Revelation of the Will of the Creator, and Governor of the world, to his dependent and accountable creatures.

VI. THE RAPID AND EXTENSIVE PROPAGATION OF  
THE GOSPEL AT ITS FIRST PREACHING.

Of all the proofs, which are adduced to establish the truth of Christianity, there is no one more splendid, than that which arises from the rapid and extensive propagation of the Gospel; and this proof will appear very strong if it be considered as the fulfilment of a long train of Prophecies. Far from being intimidated by the opposition, the enmity, or even the most severe and bloody persecutions of a hostile world, the Apostles readily obeyed the commands of their Divine Master, and declined no hardships, and avoided no danger, in order to make proselytes to the faith. The effect of their labours was in a very short time visible in every country, to which they directed their steps. The rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the polished natives of Italy and Greece, as well as the rude inhabitants of the most uncivilized countries, enlisted under the banner of the Cross. The most ancient and most popular establishments of religion, which had ever been known in the world, gradually gave way to the new faith. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian forsook their temples, consecrated by the veneration of ages to idolatrous worship, and repaired in crowds to the Christian churches; and at the close of only three centuries from its origin, the faith of the lowly Jesus of Nazareth was embraced by Constantine, the Sovereign of the Roman world, and throughout the wide compass of his dominions it was raised to the ho-

nours of a triumphant church, and to all the privileges and security of an established religion.

For the clearest proofs of these facts we may appeal not only to the animated details of those early Christian Writers, commonly called the Fathers of the Church, who expressed themselves in terms of great exultation at the prospect of this wide diffusion of the faith; but to a number of Pagans who were strongly prejudiced against the Christian cause, or were enemies to its advancement in the world. The successive accounts of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Eusebius and Chrysostom, who were all eminent writers in the Church, are confirmed by the express declarations of Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, Lucian and Porphyry, all of whom were Pagans, and lived within three centuries from the time of Christ.

If the circumstances of discouragement and danger, under which the faith of Christ made so extraordinary a progress, be more distinctly enumerated, we shall more properly estimate the value of the argument drawn from the rapid propagation of Christianity, when it was first proclaimed to the world.\*

Most of the Apostles were not only persons of low education, ignoble birth, and destitute of every distinction to recommend them to the notice and favour of the world; but were exposed to the slander and malice

\* Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 30, vol. iii, p. 94. For a concise and accurate account of the progress of Christianity, and the labours of its first preachers, see Paley, vol. i, c. 4, 5. He institutes a comparison between the first preachers of Christianity, and the modern missionaries: from the slow and inconsiderable progress made by the latter, in comparison with the rapid and extensive success of the former, he proves the divine origin of their religion. This argument is fully stated, and urged with peculiar strength and perspicuity, vol. iii, p. 50, sec. 2.

of their countrymen, for their attachment to Christ, and held in detestation by the natives of other places, by reason of their Jewish extraction and manners. They went forth to discharge their duty, as the missionaries of their divine Master, at a time when the world was enlightened by learning and science ; when philosophy was cultivated in the schools of Greece, and general knowledge was diffused over many of the places, which were the principal scenes of their labours, sufferings, and triumphs. The wiles of imposture, and the artifices of falsehood, could not long have escaped the detection of such inquisitive, intelligent, and enlightened people, as flourished in that age. The Apostles and their converts were exposed to the taunts of derision, and the cruelties of persecution ; and they risked the loss not only of liberty and character, of friends and relations, but even of life itself, for the profession of their new faith. Priests, Magistrates, and Kings were leagued against them, as they were falsely represented to be the abettors of dangerous innovations, and the disturbers of public order and tranquility. They proclaimed a system adverse no less to the established religion, than to the dearest hopes of the Jews, as they expected a triumphant Messiah from heaven, to deliver them from temporal distress, and restore the glory of their fallen kingdom. They looked with contempt on the disciples of Christ, who had suffered the punishment of a common malefactor. When the Apostles preached the Gospel to the Gentile world, they proposed no union of the principles of Christianity with the rites of Polytheism ; but, on the contrary, boldly asserted the necessity of overthrowing every altar of every idol, and of establishing the exclusive worship of the one true God. Such was the nature of

their plain declarations at the particular time, when the people of every country were strongly attached to their ancient and revered establishments of religion, which charmed the eye with magnificent processions and ceremonies, and gratified the passions with licentious festivals. Thus the power and authority of the great, the interests of the priests, the passions and prejudices of the bulk of mankind, were all engaged in open hostility against the preachers of the new religion, and seemed for ever likely to exclude the admission of Christianity.\* But all these obstacles, irresistible as they would have been by exertions merely human, gradually yielded to the unexceptionable testimony, which the first missionaries bore to the character, actions, and resurrection of their Lord and Master,—to the evidence of miracles, which they were enabled to perform,—and to the power of divine truth.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE Christian religion, even attended, as we have seen it was, with the most striking proofs of its divine origin, was no sooner proclaimed to the world, than it met with those who cavilled at its doctrines, and opposed its progress. It was too pure in its nature, and too sublime in its objects, to suit the gross conceptions of some men; and its divine Author erected too perfect a standard of duty to suit the depraved inclinations and unruly passions of others. We are therefore the less surprised to find, that it has from the earliest ages been assailed by enemies of every description. As its followers were at first exposed to the severest trials of persecution; so have they, in succeeding ages, been obliged to defend themselves against the attacks of misapplied learning, and the cavils of ingenious sophistry. Writers neither destitute of diligence nor acuteness have attempted, in various ages, to acquire reputation in this unhappy cause. The most prominent and striking circumstance which must be remarked by every candid examiner of their works, from the days of Julian the apostate to those of Gibbon the infidel historian, is, that they have frequently incurred the same censure, which they have bestowed with an unsparing hand upon others; for at the same time, that they have not scrupled to reprobate in the severest terms the intemperate zeal of the advocates for the faith, they have displayed as much, or probably more vehemence and pertinacity, in their own cause.



In each successive age since the origin of Christianity, every kind of attack has been levelled against it, which the wit of Man could dictate; sometimes it has been assailed by open arguments, sometimes by disingenuous insinuations; frequently has metaphysical subtlety endeavoured to undermine it, and frequently the sneer of sarcasm, and the effrontery of ridicule, have been directed against its sacred institutions, and its most sincere and serious professors. But much as unbelievers of every description may have asserted their claims to superiority over ignorant minds, or much as they may have imagined they soared above vulgar prejudices, they have never remained long unanswered, or unrefuted. As often as infidelity has waged war against the faith, and fought with various weapons, so often has she been defeated and disarmed by able champions of Christianity.

“Whilst the infidel mocks at the superstition of the vulgar, insults over their credulous fear, their childish errors and fantastic rites, it does not occur to him to observe, that the most preposterous device, by which the weakest devotee ever believed he was securing the happiness of a future life, is more rational than unconcern about it. Upon this subject nothing is so absurd as indifference, no folly so contemptible as thoughtlessness and levity.” Paley’s *Moral Philosophy*, p. 391.

Modern unbelievers may have reason to boast of the boldness of their attacks, but little of the *originality* of their arguments, since the cavils of Voltaire, and his Followers, newly pointed as they may be with wit, or urged as they may be with additional vehemence, can be traced to Julian, Porphyry and Celsus, the ancient enemies of the church. Some who dislike the

toil of investigating truth for themselves, eagerly take advantage of the labours of others; and lay great stress upon the example of those eminent men, who have disbelieved, or rather in some instances perhaps only affected to disbelieve, the fundamental truths of Christianity. The Christian professes not to deny the force of such an argument, because he is aware, that the weight of authority is very powerful, whether avowed or concealed. It undoubtedly gives a bias to the mind, which is more commonly felt than acknowledged; and it has considerable influence in determining the judgment in most of the affairs of life. If however this argument be urged in opposition to Christianity, fair reasoning requires that it should be allowed due force in its favour. Ask the infidel, who are the leaders, under whose banners he has enlisted himself, and perhaps he will point to Hume, and to Bolingbroke: but surely, if even we allow the elegance and acuteness of the one, and the florid declamation of the other, all the praise they deserve, they can never bear a competition with those luminaries of science, and those teachers of true wisdom, who have not only embraced the Christian faith, but maintained its truth and divine origin, and directed their conduct by its rules. They can never be weighed in the balance of merit, against the advocates of Christianity, so dispassionate, sincere, ingenuous, and acute, so divested of all objections, that can be drawn from interested attachments, as Milton, Clarendon, Hale, Boyle, Bacon, Locke, Newton, Addison, Lyttleton, West, and Johnson.\*

\* The list of those on whom *no motive* but a love of truth, and a regard for their own salvation, operated to induce them to embrace Christianity, may be greatly enlarged; more particularly by adverting to many characters of the first eminence, distinguished

Ought not the testimony, which such men as these have given, to be held in the highest estimation? A testimony founded not upon any surrender of their judgments to the prevailing opinions of the day, but upon close and patient examination of the evidences of Christianity, of which their writings give the most satisfactory proofs. Or are such men to be undervalued, when brought into comparison with the vaunting infidels of modern times? Where do we find persons of such profound understandings, and inquisitive minds, as Bacon, Locke, and Newton; where of such a sublime genius as Milton; where of such various and extensive learning; exhausting all the literary treasures of eastern, as well as western literature, as Sir William Jones, who at the close of life recorded his conviction of the truth of divine Revelation, and celebrated the excellence of the holy Scriptures? To compare the race of modern infidels in point of genius, learning, science, judgment, or love of truth;—to compare Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, Godwin and Paine, with such men as these, were surely as idle, and as absurd, as to compare the weakness of infancy with the maturity of manhood; the flutter of a butterfly with the vigorous soaring of an eagle; or the twinkling of a star with the glory of the sun, illuminating the world with his meridian brightness.

It is well remarked by an elegant and sensible writer, who could have no professional bias to influence

in other countries. To the illustrious names of Savile, Hales, Seldon, Hatton, Mead, Steel, Dugdale, Nelson, Littleton, as well as those included in my list, may be added those of Salmasius, Grotius, Montfaucon, Pascal, Puffendorf, Erasmus, Montesquieu, and Haller. I am sensible of the great imperfections of *this detail*.

his opinions, that, "The clergy are both ready and able to maintain the cause of Christianity, as their many excellent writings in defence of it sufficiently demonstrate: but as the generality of mankind is more governed by prejudice than reason, their writings are not so universally read, or so candidly received, as they deserve; because they are supposed to proceed, not from conscience and conviction, but from interested views, and the common cause of their profession—A supposition evidently as partial and injurious as that would be, which should impute the gallant behaviour of our officers to the mean consideration of their pay, and their hopes of preferment; exclusive of all the nobler motives of gentlemen; viz. the sense of honour, and the love of their country." West on the Resurrection.

Against the authority of such insidious writers as Voltaire and Gibbon, we enter our serious, and we think our equitable protest; we exhort every one to beware of their sophistry, and to guard against their delusive arts. They have violated the laws of fair controversy, and fought with the weapons that cannot be allowed on such occasions. They employ ridicule instead of argument, artful insinuations instead of serious discussion, and bold assertion instead of proof. They write to the passions and imagination, and not to the judgment of mankind. They artfully involve the questions relative to the evidences of Christianity in perplexity, and endeavour to throw the blame arising from the dissensions and usurpations, the vices and ignorance of some of the clergy, and the injury, which in dark and superstitious times was done to the liberties of mankind, upon Christianity itself. They select those topics, which can best be turned to their

purpose, by the arts of misrepresentation; they embellish them with the flowery ornaments of style, and skilfully adapt them to the passions and prejudices of their readers. As however their conduct is thus artful and insidious, so ought their labours to be vain and unfruitful; for they do not try the cause upon its own merits: they do not, like candid and dispassionate reasoners, separate the subject in dispute from all foreign and extraneous circumstances: they do not agitate questions, and start objections, from a desire of being well informed: they do not, in the spirit of true philosophy, examine the evidences of Christianity with that becoming seriousness, which is due to an affair of such infinite importance to the present welfare, and future happiness of mankind: they do not consider, that the same unbelief, if applied to the common records of history, or the ordinary affairs of life, would expose them to the imputation of blind rashness, or extreme folly. As their conduct is evidently not dictated by a love of truth, their scoffs, their sarcasms, and their sophistry, deserve no attention; and as they not only wantonly reject, but industriously depreciate the best gift of heaven, they ought to be shunned, and reprobated, as enemies to the dearest interests of mankind.\*

And they certainly ought to be so considered, whether we observe the baleful influence of their opinions

\* "I am no advocate for the abject prostration of the devotee, or the frantic ecstasies of the fanatic. But there is a superstition, says the immortal Bacon, in shunning superstition; and he that disdains to follow religion in the open and the trodden path, may chance to lose his way in the trackless wilds of experiment, or in the obscure labyrinths of speculation." Parr on *Education*, p. 24.

upon our present, or our future state. By a strange perversion of reason and argument, some of the Philosophists in France, and Godwin in England, have laboured to subvert the regular order of nature.\* Instead of representing the exercise of the private affections, as preparatory to that of public virtue, they set the one in direct opposition to the other. They propose to build *universal philanthropy* upon the ruins of *individual benevolence*, and tell us we must love our whole species *more*, at the same time they direct us to love every individual of it *less*. In pursuit of this chimerical project, which to the shame and disgrace of this country, has found advocates in England, as well as in France, gratitude, humility, conjugal, parental, and filial affection, together with all the lovely train of domestic virtues, are ridiculed and degraded, as too low and vulgar for the attention of enlightened philosophers; virtue is confined solely to a certain vague and enthusiastic ardour for the general good, and the affections for the social circle in which we live are violently transferred to distant countries and unknown multitudes. But surely it is natural to inquire, when all the common charities are thus deadened and destroyed, when the flame that communicates its genial warmth and brightness to social life is extinguished, and all the ties that now bind man to man are torn asunder by the hand of the modern Philosophists—surely it is natural to inquire, whence is this ardent affection for the general

\* For this train of observation I am indebted to "Modern Infidelity considered," in a Sermon preached at the Baptist Meeting at Cambridge, by R. Hall, A. M. Considering the sound arguments of this writer, recommended by great eloquence and zeal in the cause of Christianity, I am inclined to exclaim, "*talis cum sit, utinam noster esset.*" See p. 57, &c.

good to spring? And when they have completed their work of insensibility, or rather of infatuation; when they have taught their disciple to look with perfect indifference upon his nearest connexions; when he has estranged himself from his friends, insulted his benefactors, and silenced the voice of gratitude, pity, and charity, will he be better prepared for the love of his species? Will he become a true philanthropist, in proportion as he labours to suppress the feelings, and neglects the duties of a parent and a friend? Rather may we not conclude with certainty, that, in this attempt to revive a species of Stoicism, and to banish all the feelings which soften, humanize, and refine our hearts, selfishness, moroseness, and cold and sullen apathy will assume the empire of the soul and sink the human character to the lowest state of degradation and wretchedness? Rather may we not be certain, that under pretence of advancing the general and universal good—terms that are so indefinite as to be almost unintelligible, when applied to creatures of limited capacities like man, endued with limited powers, and moving in narrow spheres of action—terms belonging to an object to which imagination may give innumerable shapes—rather may we not be certain that he will be prepared for the breach of every duty, and the perpetration of every crime? But if those who indulge in these wild speculations, and thus sport with humanity as well as reason, were to examine the holy Scriptures, they would perceive that Revelation is in perfect harmony with the order of nature, which instructs us by our own feelings, that universal benevolence is the last and most perfect fruit of the social affections. Such is the voice of nature, and such is the principle of *ancient philosophy* refined, enlarged, and perfected by

Christianity. The solid arguments of the great Roman Orator, when reasoning upon this subject, in which he comprises the wisdom of all former ages, coincide with the precepts of holy Writ. Thus do Reason and Revelation unite to confirm the order of Nature, which leads in all things from particulars to generals, from private to public affections, from the love of parents, brothers, and sisters, to those more extensive relations, which, beginning with our native place, extend to our country, and thence proceeding, comprehend the vast society of the human race. An attempt to reverse this order is as absurd as to build without a foundation, to expect a copious and perennial stream after the source of a river has been exhausted, or to think to attain the height of science, without acquiring the first elements of knowledge.

From whatever causes the doubts and cavils of modern Infidels arise, whether from a desire to gain the reputation of superior sagacity, a love of novelty, an ambition to soar above vulgar notions, a fear of being thought credulous or superstitious, or the pursuit of such practices as are inconsistent with the purity of the Christian character; it is clear, they are imperfectly acquainted with the real nature of the religion itself, and the various proofs by which it is supported. They condemn not so much what they do not understand, as what they do not give themselves the trouble to investigate. Do they carefully examine the *facts* which had such great influence in attracting the notice of the world to our Saviour? I allude to the *miracles* of various kinds which he wrought; and do they read the accounts of those wonderful operations of divine power and goodness, with minds disposed to yield to the force of historical evidence! We read in the awful parable



of the Rich Man and Lazarus, that the former, when in a state of torment, was desirous that a person might be sent from the dead for the conversion of his unbelieving Brothers. Is there any Infidel who wishes for such a proof of the truth of Christianity? Suppose God should grant his desire, and that in the still and solemn hours of the night, *when deep sleep had fallen upon the rest of Mankind*, a Spirit should pass before him, whose form he could not distinctly discern, but which resembled a lately departed Friend, "Fear would come upon him, and trembling, which would cause all his bones to shake." Job iv, 14. Suppose there should be profound silence, and then a voice be heard, saying, *I am come to tell you there is a God—a Heaven and a Hell: forsake your sins, ere it be too late, and seek salvation in the Gospel of Christ, or you will perish for ever.* What effect would this vision produce? Probably it would terrify the Infidel to death; or should he survive it, and be at first deeply impressed with the awful circumstances, it is probable, that the cares and the pleasures of the world would gradually wear out its impression. As to his sceptical Friends, they would not believe him, they would strive to laugh, or to reason him out of his alarms, by representing that all he related was a dream. He would in time begin to think so himself, and perhaps would suspect that he had been imposed upon, and so would remain obdurate and unconvinced. As such evidence of the truth of Revelation would be thus ineffectual, so is it highly unnecessary, for no facts recorded in the history of Mankind are more fully attested than the miracles of our Lord. Did he not repair to the Tomb of Lazarus, the Brother of Martha and Mary, who had been dead four days, *and in the presence of many people cry aloud to him*

to come forth,—and did not the dead Man hear his voice, and live for a long time after? John ii, 12. See Burder's Sermons, xxiv. Our Lord declared repeatedly that he should himself rise from the Tomb. When the appointed hour arrived, was there not a great Earthquake, and did not the Saviour of the World arise? Were not these things attested by friends, and by enemies, who were all *eye-witnesses*; and did not the primitive Christians endure every hardship, and suffer every torment in *proof* of such facts? What need therefore can there be of any additional assurances? If the Infidel will not believe Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles; neither will he be persuaded, *though one come to him from the dead*.

A due attention to ancient history might have a happy effect in removing many of the doubts of Unbelievers, and preparing the way for their conversion. Let them inquire into the ignorance and depravity of the world, before the coming of Christ; the superstition and the cruelty of Pagan worship, and the insufficiency of philosophy, as a guide to moral excellence: let them consider, whether it was not highly probable, that under such circumstances an all-wise and an all-merciful Being would impart his will to mankind; let them ask themselves seriously, whether it is reasonable to conclude, that, after ages of ignorance of his true character, this all-wise and all-merciful Being would at length fix upon falsehood, and that alone, as they pretend Christianity to be, for the effectual method of making himself known to his creatures (Hall's Sermon, p. 48.); and that what the honest and ardent exercise of reason by the wisest men, such as Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, was not permitted to accomplish, he should allow to be effected by fraud, delusion, and im-

## THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

posture. Let them proceed to weigh the *leading facts* attending the rise of Christianity;—facts that rest entirely upon independent proofs to establish their truth; such as the humble birth of our Lord, the sublime nature of his Gospel, absolutely irreconcilable with the prejudices of his countrymen, and extremely unpalatable to the Gentiles; and more particularly the total want of all human aid to ensure its reception, and promote its success: were they to apply their minds seriously to the subject, would they not, we may confidently ask, find these, and many other arguments tending to the same point? And might not their curiosity then lead them to extend their researches into all its direct and positive evidences?

Among other instances that might be mentioned, the conduct of the author of “the Free Inquiry into the Origin of Evil” gives us full authority to answer these questions in the affirmative. He has stated with great candour the progress of his conviction of the truth of Christianity; and makes his acknowledgments in its favour in a manner, which shews the strength and the tendency of its evidences, when examined with care and attention.

“ Having some leisure, and more curiosity, I employed them both in resolving a question, which seemed to me of some importance—whether Christianity was really an imposture, or whether it is what it pretends to be, a revelation communicated to mankind by the interposition of supernatural power? On a candid inquiry, I soon found that the first was an absolute impossibility; and that its pretensions to the latter were founded on the most solid grounds. In the further pursuit of my examination, I perceived at every step new lights arising, and some of the brightest from

parts of it the most obscure, but productive of the clearest proofs, because equally beyond the power of human artifice to invent, and human reason to discover. These arguments, which have convinced me of the divine origin of this Religion, I have put together, in as clear and concise a manner as I was able, thinking they might have the same effect upon others: and being of opinion, that if there were a few more true Christians in the world, it would be beneficial to themselves and by no means detrimental to the public.\*

The excellence of Christianity appears in nothing more than that in proportion to the care with which its sacred oracles are examined, the more strongly does the light of its truth shine upon the mind. The progress of Infidelity, and the apostasy of multitudes naturally awaken our concern, and make us more than usually solicitous to caution the rising generation against the errors of those, who wish to mislead them. But is there any circumstance in these awful "signs of the times," that should shake our faith, or excite our surprise, as if the *present crisis* was peculiarly alarming and unexpected? The attentive reader of the holy Scriptures may safely reply in the negative; since the actual condition of the world is precisely such as revelation gives us reason to expect. All the circumstances that mark the character and the conduct of Infidels; their turn for ridicule; their folly, and impatience of restraint; their licentiousness of conduct, and insatiable appetite for change; the snares they lay to catch the unwary; and their vain professions to free the world from slavery, whilst they are themselves the captives

\* Soame Jenyns's View of the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion, p. 190.

of sin, are drawn by the pencil of Prophecy, with such clearness and accuracy, that no one can mistake the resemblance.

In the Epistles of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Jude, you may read an exact anticipation of that modern Philosophism, which was ordained to agitate and afflict the world, in these "latter" or "last times." And thus, by examining the Prophetic Word of God, and comparing it with the present state of the world, you increase the Evidences of Christianity. The Free-thinkers of England, the Philosophists of France, and the Illuminati of Germany, the disciples of Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Weishaupt, confirm the divine origin of the Scripture, which they reject, and accomplish in a most exact and wonderful manner, the predictions which are the subjects of their contempt and ridicule.\*

"The probability that the Gospel may be true, is inferred from the utter improbability that it should be false. It is like nothing of human contrivance. The perfection of its morality transcends the best efforts of human wisdom: the character of its Founder is far superior to that of a mere man: and it will not be said, that his Apostles can be compared to any other fishermen, or any other teachers, that ever were heard of. The views displayed in the Gospel of the Divine dispensations, with respect to the human race, are such as before the commencement of our Saviour's ministry had never entered into the mind of man. To believe all this to be a mere human fable requires a degree of credulity, which, in the ordinary affairs of life, would do a man little credit; it is like believing, that a first

\* See the "Interpreter of Prophecy," Vol. II. for a particular account of their pernicious errors.

rate ship of war might have been the work and the invention of a child." Beattie's Evidence of the Christian Religion, v. i, p. 86.

#### I. THE BENEFITS RESULTING FROM CHRISTIANITY.

Let the sincere inquirer after truth turn with aversion from such delusive guides, as the Infidel writers either of ancient or modern times, and consider what are the benefits, which the prevalence of Christianity has actually conferred upon the world; and let him carefully estimate what permanent and substantial good, by the influence of its precepts, and the fulfilment of its promises, it is able at all times to produce.

The Christian Religion has triumphed over those practices, customs, and institutions, which in ancient times were a disgrace to the character of man. It has softened the horrors of war, and alleviated the treatment of prisoners. It has vindicated the rights of nature, by abolishing the cruel practice of exposing infants; and it has raised the character and the importance of women in society, and given greater dignity, permanency, and honour to the institution of marriage. It put a stop to the combats of gladiators, the favourite and barbarous amusement of the Romans; it banished the impure conduct that disgraced the worship of the Pagan Deities, as well as totally extinguished the worship itself. It has abridged the labours of the mass of mankind, and procured for them one happy day in seven for the enjoyment of repose, and attention to the exercises of public devotion. All Christian countries, and more especially our own, abound with establishments for the relief of sickness and poverty, and the maintenance of helpless infancy,

and decrepid age. It has triumphed over the slavery, that prevailed in every part of the Roman Empire, and pursues its glorious progress, in the diminution of a similar state of misery and oppression, which has long disgraced the European character in the West Indies.

Thus has it in its general and combined effects exalted the character of man, by engrafting the purest affections, and the most sacred duties upon the stock of his natural desires, and most powerful instincts. It has provided the means of establishing a perfect harmony between the sensibilities of his nature, and the convictions of his reason, by the Revelation of its divine truths.

And, not to expatiate upon its mild and salutary effects upon the temper, the passions, and the general conduct of millions, who, although their names were never recorded in the pages of history, were more worthy and honourable members of society, and are infinitely more deserving the approbation of mankind, than all the ancient heroes who have sought renown by war, or all the modern sceptics who have aspired to fame by their opposition to the faith; we may enumerate, in addition to its extensive and various improvements, the refinement it has given to *manners*, and its beneficial influence upon the public judgment of *morals*. Mankind, no longer left a prey to ignorance, or to loose and fluctuating opinions, are furnished with a guide, to which they can always resort, for principles of religion and rules of conduct. Hence the most illiterate and humble members of the Christian Church can form more true and accurate notions of the Deity, his attributes and providence, as well as a more rational notion of moral obligation, of virtue, and vice, and the

final destination of man, than was ever reached by the ancient sages in the brightest days of Heathen Philosophy.

Christianity, far from being calculated for any political constitution in particular, is found to prosper and flourish under *every form* of government; it corrects the spirit of democracy, and softens the rigour of despotic power. An enlargement of mind, and superior intelligence, distinguish in a peculiar manner those nations that have embraced the faith, from those extensive portions of mankind, who fight under the banners of Mahomet, or adhere to the more pacific Institutes of Brama and Confucius. The inhabitants of the East groan under the oppressions of arbitrary power, and little can their religion contribute to alleviate the weight of their chains. The Mahometans more especially are marked by peculiar ignorance; and so far are they from being distinguished by the light of science, or the cultivation of useful knowledge, that they rarely adopt any foreign improvements, and even smother in its birth the spirit of liberal inquiry and research. White's Bampton Lect. Sermon. ix.

To christian nations belong the exclusive cultivation of learning and science, and the most assiduous advancement of every useful and ornamental art. By them every faculty of the soul is called forth into action; no torpid indolence stops the bold career of their genius, or restrains the patient and effectual operations of their industry. Since the purity of religion was restored by the Reformation, every part of Christendom has caught the flame of emulation; general knowledge is widely diffused, and the character of a Christian, and more particularly that of a Protestant, is marked by a superior improvement of the intellectual powers.



## II. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Our Church, which stands at the head of the Protestant Establishments, was, by the divine Providence purified from the corruptions of the See of Rome in the reign of Henry VIII. Her courageous and enlightened Reformers threw off the yoke of Papal supremacy and superstition, revived the lively image of the primitive Establishment, and restored the modes of worship that had prevailed in the purest times of Christianity. This conformity has been celebrated by its own members at home, and its admirers abroad, as its most illustrious and distinguishing characteristic. The fundamental Articles of her Faith are strictly consistent with Scripture; her sacred edifices, divested of the gaudy decorations of Popish temples, are furnished only with those appendages which give dignity to public worship. Her devotional exercises, not confined to a foreign tongue, but intelligible to all, may be fairly pronounced superior to all other sacred compositions of human origin, for simplicity of language, fervour of piety, and evangelical tenour of sentiment. The orders of the Priesthood; deriving their origin from the Apostles themselves, are confirmed by the earliest usage, and are recommended by the great utility of clerical subordination. The constitution of the State, in return for the alliance which it has formed with the Church, derives from the association additional security for the observance of the laws, and the preservation of order. The unmolested profession, and open exercise of their own particular worship, are allowed to Dissenters of all denominations. The prudent toleration, with which they are indulged, equally avoids the extremes of persecution, which cuts asunder the ties of charity, and of that unbounded free-

dom, which may convert religion into an engine of political mischief. Thus deservedly renowned for her institutions, and her modes of worship, the Church of England is as favourable to the cultivation of the mind, as to the advancement of pure Christianity; and the zeal of her sons for the promotion of her interests has never been more conspicuous, than their learning, their talents, and their virtues.

## CONCLUSION.

To the prevalence of Christianity, the study of its records, and the institutions and establishments to which it gave rise, modern times are indebted for the preservation of the invaluable remains of Grecian and Roman literature. When the barbarians of the North, and the East, and the Mahometans of the South overspread the provinces of the Roman Empire, the city of Constantinople, where we may recollect the Christian Religion had been first supported by Imperial authority, preserved its inhabitants from that general ignorance which overspread the rest of the world. During the dark ages, the light of learning, however feeble, was still kept burning in monastic cells; the Latin language, into which the Scriptures were translated, was cultivated; and the precious remains of classical genius escaped the ravages, to which every other species of property was exposed by the ferocity and violence of a barbarous people. From these repositories, happily secured from destruction by the superstition of the times, they were drawn at the revival of learning; and the service which they have afforded to the human mind has not been confined to its researches into philosophy, science, and literature, but extend-

ed to sacred criticism, and the illustration of the Scriptures.

As Christianity is thus auspicious to the cultivation, of the intellectual powers, as well as beneficial in its moral effects, it deserves the first attention of the studious. The duties which it prescribes indeed are admirably calculated to produce that docile temper and soberness of thought, those habits of perseverance and patient investigation, which are absolutely necessary in the pursuit of general knowledge. Religion stamps its just value upon all other attainments, and consecrates them to the best and most noble service. It asserts its own glorious and transcendent superiority, because it confines not its researches to objects of immediate utility only, but elevates our thoughts to heaven, and carries on the mind to the growing improvement of its faculties, throughout the infinite ages of eternity.\*

Such are the reasons for our urgent importunities to our young readers, to lay the foundations of their lives on the firm ground of Christian faith, and build upon it whatever is just and good, worthy and noble; till the structure be complete in moral beauty. "The world, into which you are entering, lies in wait with a variety of temptations. Unfavourable sentiments of religion will soon be suggested to you, and all the snares

\* To that elevation of mind above the common events of life, whether prosperous or adverse, which Christianity is capable of inspiring, may be applied the noble description of Claudian:—

*Fortunæ secunda nitet, nec fascibus ullis  
Erigitur, plausu cupit chrescere vulgi:  
Nil opis externæ cupiens, nil indiga laudis,  
Divitiis animosa suis, immotaque cunctis  
Casibus, ex alta mortalia despicit arce.*

of luxury, false honour, and interest, spread in your way, which are too successful, and to many fatal. Happy the few that in any part of life become sensible of their errors, and with painful resolution tread back the wrong steps, which they have taken! But happiest of men is he, who by an even course of right conduct from the first, as far as human frailty permits, hath at once avoided the miseries of sin, the sorrows of repentance, and the difficulties of virtue; who not only can think of his present state with composure, but reflects on his past behaviour with thankful approbation; and looks forward with unmixed joy to that important future hour, when he shall appear before God, and humbly offer to him a whole life spent in his service." Archbishop Secker's Sermons.

Let me then continue most seriously to exhort you, *my young Readers*, to listen with all earnestness to the sacred words of the great Founder of our holy Religion. Attend with mingled sensations of delight, gratitude, and reverence, to the revelation of the Divine will, which he descended from heaven to promulgate. The duties, which you owe to your Maker, to mankind, and to yourselves, are stated with full authority, and explained with the utmost perspicuity in the inspired Writings of his Evangelists and Apostles. In them you find that the Saviour of the world has illustrated his divine precepts by the most pleasing and striking examples, has enforced them by the most awful sanctions, and recommended them by the bright perfection of his own conduct. There he has unfolded the great mystery of redemption, and communicated the means, by which degenerate and fallen man may recover the favour of his offended Maker. There he gives a clear view of the divine administration of all human affairs:

and there he represents this mortal life, which forms only a part of our existence, as a short period of warfare and trial. He points to the solemn scenes, which open beyond the grave; the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the impartial distribution of rewards and punishments. He displays the completion of the divine mercy and goodness in the final establishment of perfection and happiness. By making such wonderful and interesting discoveries, let him excite your zeal, and fix your determination to adorn the acquirements of learning and science with the graces of his holy Religion, and to dedicate the days of health and of youth to his honour and service. Amid the retirement of study, or the business of active life, let it be your first care, as it is your *duty*, and your *interest*, to recollect, that the great Author and Finisher of your faith has placed the rewards of virtue beyond the reach of time and death; and promised that eternal happiness to the faith and obedience of man, which can alone fill his capacity for enjoyment, and alone satisfy the ardent desires of his soul.

## CLASS THE SECOND.

### LANGUAGE.

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#### CHAPTER I.

#### LANGUAGE IN GENERAL.

THE principles and characteristics of Language render it a subject of pleasing and useful inquiry. It is the general vehicle of our ideas, and represents by words all the conceptions of the mind. Books and conversation are the offspring of this prolific parent. The former introduce us to the treasures of learning and science, and make us acquainted with the opinions, discoveries, and transactions of past ages; by the latter the general intercourse of society is carried on, and our ideas are conveyed to each other with nearly the same rapidity, with which they arise in the mind. Language, in conjunction with reason, to which it gives its proper activity, use, and ornament, raises man above the lower orders of animals; and, in proportion as it is polished and refined, exalts one nation above another in the scale of civilization and intellectual dignity.

Inquiries into the nature of any particular Language, if not too abstruse and metaphysical, are subjects of pleasing and useful speculation. So close is

the connexion between words and ideas, that no learning whatever can be obtained without their aid and interposition. In proportion as the former are studied and examined, the latter become clear and complete; and according as words convey our meaning in a full and adequate manner, we avoid the inconvenience of being misunderstood, and are secure from the perplexity of doubt, the errors of misconception, and the cavils of dispute. It must always be remembered, that words are merely the *arbitrary* signs of ideas, connected with them by custom, not allied to them by nature; and that each idea, like a ray of light, is liable to be tinged by the medium of the word through which it passes. The volumes of controversy which fill the libraries of the learned would have been comparatively very small, if the disputants who wrote them had given a clear definition of their principal terms. Accurate definition is one of the most useful parts of logic; and we shall find, when we come to the examination of that subject, that it is the only solid ground upon which reason can build her arguments, and proceed to just conclusions.

In order that the true sense of words may be ascertained, and that they may strike with their whole force, derivation must lend its aid to definition. It is this which points out the source from whence a word springs, and the various streams of signification that flow from it. The student, while employed in tracing the origin of Language, and ascertaining its signification, will reap great advantage from calling *history* to his assistance; and he will find that allusions, idioms, and figures of speech are illustrated by particular facts, opinions, and institutions. The customs of the Greeks throw light upon the expressions of their au-

thors; without some acquaintance with the Roman laws, many forms of expression in the Orations of Cicero are unintelligible; and many descriptions in the Old and New Testament are obscure, unless they are illustrated by a knowledge of eastern manners. Furnished with such aids, the scholar acquires complete, not partial information; throws upon Language all the light that can be reflected from his general studies; and imbibes, as far as a modern can imbibe it, the true and original spirit of ancient authors.

As long as any one confines his studies solely to his native tongue, he cannot understand it perfectly, or ascertain with accuracy its poverty or richness, its beauties or defects. He who cultivates other languages as well as his own, gains new instruments to increase the stock of his ideas, and opens new roads to the temple of knowledge. He draws his learning from pure sources, converses with the natives of other countries without the assistance of an interpreter, and surveys the contents of books without the dim and unsteady light of translations. He may unite the speculations of a philosopher with the acquirements of a linguist; he may compare different tongues, and form just conclusions with respect to their defects and beauties, and their correspondence with the temper, genius, and manners of a people. He may trace the progress of national refinement, and discover by a comparison of arts and improvements with their correspondent terms, that the history of Language, inasmuch as it develops the efforts of human genius, and the rise and advancement of its inventions, constitutes an important part of the history of Man.



## I. THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

Various theories have been formed to account for the origin of language, which, however ingenious, are far from being satisfactory. The celebrated author of the *Wealth of Nations* supposes "two savages, who had never been taught to speak, and who had been bred up remote from the societies of men, would naturally begin to form that language, by which they would endeavour to make their sentiments intelligible to each other, by uttering certain sounds, whenever they meant to denote objects." Thus they would begin to give names to things, to class individual objects under a species, which they denoted by a common name, and proceed gradually to the formation of all the parts of speech.\*

The condition of these two savages is wholly imaginary, as it cannot apply to any persons, who have ever been known to exist. It may fairly be asked, how they came into such a state? Was it in consequence of their own previous determination? If it was, then they must have conversed, in order to make such an agreement. If it was not the result of such a measure, they must have been placed there by other rational and talking beings, and must consequently have acquired from them the names, which in their recluse condition they applied to the surrounding objects. If they borrowed the terms from others, then of course the hypothesis of a language, considered as an invention of the savages themselves, falls at once to the ground.

\* Considerations concerning the first formation of languages, in Smith's *Theory of moral Sentiments*, vol. ii, p. 403.

Some instances, it may be granted, have been reported of persons, who have been found in a wild state, without education or the use of speech: but no accurate and well-authenticated account is given of the exact time of life, when they were first placed in such a state, or of their manner of living. Upon such weak principles, therefore, no argument can be established to confirm the truth of the hypothesis.

The theory of Lord Monboddo, embellished as it is by quotations from ancient authors, and supported by plausible arguments, is liable to similar objections. (Origin of Language, vol. i, p. 514, 545, 626, vol. iv, p. 50.) He supposes, that language was not originally natural to man, and that the *political* state of society was necessary for its invention. This principle forms the basis of his elaborate work on the origin and progress of language. He asserts that man in his natural state is a wild animal, without language or arts of any kind. To prove this point, he cites the opinions of Lucretius and Horace, who describe the human race as first rising from the earth, mute and savage, and living for some time in a state of war, before the invention of arts and the establishment of laws introduced the improvement of manners. He quotes descriptions from the works of Diodorus Siculus, Leo Africanus, and other writers. But in the whole detail of his authorities, there is not one strong and well attested fact, that is strictly and indisputably to his purpose. The vague and fanciful descriptions of poets cannot be admitted as proper evidence in such a case. The accounts of Diodorus Siculus, and the other writers whom he presses into his service, are taken from the reports of credulous travellers. Some of them are not to the purpose; in many of the others

are circumstances highly improbable, or evidently false. Some of the descriptions are not sufficiently accurate to enable us to ascertain, whether the beings, that were observed by travellers to live in a wild state, were really men, or inferior animals. Lord Monboddo is aware that the arguments of Rousseau, founded upon the principle that there could be no society without language, press with great force against his whole system. To what instances then has he recourse to extricate himself from the difficulty? Not to an example taken from a race of men possessing the faculty of reason, and the organs of speech; but from the beavers of Canada, and the foxes of the river Danastria! When he ought to adduce instances of *men*, he produces those of *inferior* animals; and his descriptions of them are so extraordinary, that they are entitled to very little credit. When he speaks of society, he certainly must be understood to mean only the state of such creatures, as, destitute of the organs of speech, herd together merely as they are impelled by the force of instinct. Such a state is more properly to be called *gregarious*, than *sociable*; because to the latter term is always applied some idea of a disposition to converse, and to communicate thought, which is totally inconsistent with the nature of any beings, not endowed with the faculty of speech.

How the original societies of men could have been formed without the aid of language, or language invented without society, are points which the disquisitions of these writers, however ingenious, are far from enabling us to settle. The only rational and satisfactory method of solving the difficulty is to refer the origin of speech to the great Creator himself. Not that it is

necessary to suppose, that he inspired the first parents of mankind with any particular original or primitive language; but that he made them fully sensible of the power with which they were endued of forming articulate sounds, gave them an impulse to exert it, and left the arbitrary imposition of words to their own choice. Their ingenuity was left to itself to multiply names, as new objects occurred to their observation; and thus language was gradually advanced in process of time to the different degrees of copiousness and refinement, which it has reached among various nations.

This theory is conformable to the description given in the Sacred Writings, and agrees very remarkably with the opinions to be collected from prophane history. Plato maintains that the original language of man was of divine formation; and when he divides words into two classes, the primitive and the derivative, he attributes the latter to the ingenuity of man, and the former to the immediate communication of the Supreme Being. The Egyptians, from whom this opinion was probably derived, maintained that by Thoth, the god of eloquence, their ancestors were at first taught to articulate.

To whatever part of the globe we direct our view, we shall find additional reasons to conclude, that all the languages now spoken in the world were derived originally from one and the same source, notwithstanding their apparent difference and variety. When we remark certain words in Latin, that resemble others in Greek, we are not surprised, considering the intimate connexion which subsisted between the two nations, and the evident derivation of the former from the latter. It is natural to suppose that the modern tongues were derived from the ancient, which were spoken in the

same country. Thus all the present languages and dialects of Europe, amounting to about twenty-seven, may be traced to the *Latin*, *Teutonic*, and *Sclavonian*. But when we observe that certain words used in one quarter of the globe are like those in another which is very remote, and that such words have exactly the same signification, and were so used long before the present inhabitants had any intercourse with each other, how is this to be accounted for? And whence arises the affinity in some remarkable instances between the Greek and Hebrew, Greek and Sanscrit, Greek and Chinese, English and Arabic, Turkish and Celtic, Welsh and Arabic, Latin and Otaheitan, Latin and Turkish, and English and Persian?

I could show the coincidence in many points between Greek and Sanscrit, between the dialect of the Hebudes and the remote language of China: I could perhaps ascertain the existence of many Celtic and Egyptian words in China, which prove the ancient connexion between the original families of the earth, the immediate descendants of Japhet and Ham the Sons of Noah: but the limited nature of my plan makes it necessary to refer such of my readers as are desirous of pursuing this curious investigation, to the learned words of Sammes, Pezron, Junius, Skinner, and Parkhurst;—to Rowland's *Mona*, and Williams's *Primitive Christianity*.

This identity or resemblance more or less exact of names which denote the same ideas, and those ideas some of the most striking and important to mankind in every age of society, seems to point to the same source. It seems highly probable therefore, that one original fountain of speech, and one only, has produced not only those various streams of diction, such as the

Celtic, that have been long dried up; but supplied those likewise, such as the languages of modern Europe, that still continue to flow. Hence the accounts recorded by Moses of the primeval race of men speaking one language, and their subsequent dispersion in consequence of the confusion of tongues which took place at Babel, receives strong confirmation. These are facts which furnish the best reason for the uniformity we have noticed, and they could not, on any other principle, be accounted for, in a manner so satisfactory to reason, or so consistent with the tenor of ancient history.

Language kept pace with the progress of invention, and the cultivation of the mind urged mankind to the increase and improvement of the sounds, by which its dictates were communicated to the ear. From denoting the perceptions of sense, they proceeded to represent by words the instruments and operations of art, the flights of fancy, the deductions of reason, and the results of observation and experience. Hence may be traced the progress of poetry, history, and philosophy. Thus oral expression, from being in its early age the child of necessity, became the parent of ornament; and words, originally the rude and uncouth dresses of ideas, have been improved, as society has advanced to higher degrees of refinement, into their most splendid and most beautiful decorations.

## II. ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF LETTERS.

To fix the fleeting sounds as soon as they are breathed from the lips, and to represent ideas faithfully to the eye as soon as they are formed in the mind, by certain determinate characters, are the wonderful properties of letters. Those to whom books have from their

childhood been familiar, and who view literature only in its present advanced state of improvement, cannot form a just estimate of the difficulties that attended the first application of symbols or signs to the expression of ideas. The pictures of the Mexicans, and the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, were without doubt very ingenious devices, and mark the various efforts which human ingenuity can make towards expressing what passes in the mind, by objects of sight: but it comes not within the province of the art of painting to represent a succession of thoughts; and its operations are very tedious and circuitous; so that such a mode of information is very ill adapted to the activity and the variety of mental exertions. The great excellence of letters consists in their simplicity; by a small number of characters, repeated and variously combined, all words are expressed with equal precision and facility. They possess a decided advantage over all other artificial vehicles of thought, by communicating with the utmost ease the various conceptions of the mind. By their assistance in carrying on epistolary correspondence, the warm effusions of affection and friendship are conveyed even to the most remote countries; and the constant intercourse of commerce, science, and learning, is maintained in defiance of all the obstacles of distance. Learning is indebted to letters for its diffusion and continuance, and to them genius and virtue owe the rewards of lasting fame. Oral tradition is fleeting and uncertain: it is a stream, which, as it insensibly flows into the ocean of oblivion, is mixed with the impure soil of error and falsehood. But letters furnish the unsullied, memorials of truth, and impart to successive generations the perfect records of knowledge. They constitute the light, glory, and ornament of civilized man; and when the voice

of the philosopher, the poet, and the scholar, and even the sacred words of the Redeemer of mankind himself, are heard no more, letters record the bright examples of virtue, and teach the inestimable lessons of science, learning, and revelation to every age, and to every people.

We cannot fail to observe the great variety in the modes of writing, which prevail in different parts of the world. Some nations, as the Chinese, place their letters perpendicularly, and write from the top to the bottom of the page. The greatest number have followed the movement of the hand from left to right, which to an European appears most natural and easy: accordingly all the western nations place their letters in this order. On the contrary, it was the prevailing custom of the East, particularly of the Egyptians, Phenicians, Arabians, and Hebrews, to pursue the opposite practice, and write from right to left.

These various modes of arrangement may give some plausibility to the opinion, that each particular people were the inventors of their own alphabet. A presumption so favourable to national vanity has accordingly prevailed, as the Egyptians attributed the origin of their letters to Mercury, the Greeks to Cadmus, and the Latins to Saturn. This opinion arose from the high reputation acquired by those who first introduced, or made improvements in the graphic art. For it seems highly probable, that all the alphabets now known and used, were originally derived from one and the same source, and were brought, at various periods of time, into different countries.

Can any two sets of letters appear to the eye more dissimilar, than the *Hebrew* and the *English*? Yet it is highly probable, that the latter were derived from



the former. And if we attend to the ingenious arguments of Bp. Warburton, we may carry the origin of letters higher than to the Jewish nation, and refer them to the Egyptian hieroglyphics. He states, upon the authority of ancient writers, that throughout many of the early ages of the world, there was a regular gradation of improvement in the manner of conveying ideas by signs—that pictures were first used as the representatives of thoughts, and in process of time alphabetical characters were substituted, as an easier and more commodious mode of communication, than the vague use of arbitrary marks. Divine Legation, v. ii, p. 387, &c. Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, brought letters with the rest of his learning from Egypt; and he simplified their forms, in order to prevent the abuse to which they would have been liable, as symbolical characters, among a people so much inclined to superstition as the Jews. From the Jews this alphabetical mode of writing passed to the Syrians and Phœnicians, or perhaps was common to them all at the same time. The Greek authors maintained that Cadmus and his Phœnician companions introduced the knowledge of letters into Greece. Herodotus records the curious fact that he saw at Thebes in Bœotia, in the temple of Apollo, three tripods inscribed with Cadmeian letters, which very much resembled the Ionic. It is too well known to require any detail of proof, that the Romans were taught their letters by the Greeks. Tacitus has remarked the similarity of the Roman character to the most ancient Greek, that is, the Pelasgic; and the same observation is made by Pliny, and confirmed by the inscription on an ancient tablet of brass, dedicated to Minerva. By the Romans their alphabet was communicated to the Goths, and the nations of modern Europe,

And if evidence to this detail of external proofs be wanted, the curious may furnish themselves with very sufficient arguments, in the authentic inscriptions of antiquity which time has spared, by considering attentively the order, the names, and the powers of the letters in the several alphabets just mentioned; and by examining in the learned works of Montfaucon, Shuckford, and Warburton, the characters themselves, how they have gradually been altered, and have deviated from the first forms through successive changes, previous to their assuming the shapes and figures under which they at present appear.\*

### III. CHARACTERISTIC DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN ANCIENT AND MODERN LANGUAGES.

The formation of the modern languages of Europe is intimately connected with the history of the dark ages. The Latin language began to be corrupted in the fifth century, as soon as the Goths and Lombards, both of whom derived their origin from Germany, had gained possession of Italy. From the reign of Theodoric and Athalaric, who laboured to soften the rough manners of the Goths by the refinements of learning, the Italian language gradually assumed its form and character; and its deviation from the Latin was particularly marked by the use of articles instead of the variations of cases, and of auxiliar verbs instead of many changes of tenses.

\* Stillingfleet, v. i, c. i, sect. 20. Shuckford's Connections, v. i, p. 223. Mitford, v. i, p. 88. Herodotus, l. v. Terpsich. sect. 58, 59, p. 306, edit. Gronov. Taciti Ann. l. xi. Plinii Nat. Hist. l. vii, c. lviii. Goguet's Origin of Laws, v. i, p. 177.

In proportion as the Goths made more successful and extensive ravages in the Roman empire, their phraseology was blended with that of their captives, and the coarse dialect of Provence and Sicily contributed many ingredients to the composition of the Italian language; in the same manner as the fusion of the precious and baser metals at the conflagration of Corinth is said to have produced the valuable mixture, which derives its name from that celebrated city. As in the features of the Italian ladies, the curious traveller may now discern a striking likeness of the faces engraved on antique gems; so in the language of that country he may discover a strong resemblance to the original from which it is derived. If it wants the strength and majesty of the Latin, it inherits that delicacy and melodious flow of expression, which never fail to charm every reader of taste, in the works of Dante, Ariosto, Petrarch, Machiavel, Algarotti, and Metastasio. It is the singular glory of Italy, that while the early poets and historians of France and England are become in a great measure obsolete, her writers, who flourished so early as the fourteenth century, are read with the fashionable authors of the present times, and share their popularity and applause.

In the fifth century, the Franks, a people of Germany, under the command of Pharamond, invaded France, and conquered its ancient inhabitants, the Celts and Romans. By a mixture of the dialect of these people the French language was formed, which gradually polishing the rude expressions and uncouth phraseology observable in its first writers, has acquired in later times a great degree of precision, delicacy, and elegance.

Between the languages of Greece and Rome, and those of modern times, a very remarkable difference prevails. The prepositions of the latter supply the place of the cases of the former; and as these prepositions are of a very abstract and general nature, they show the progress of the moderns in metaphysical reasoning. Auxiliary verbs are used instead of many of the ancient tenses: these forms of expression contribute greatly to simplify modern languages, in point of rudiments and first principles, and consequently render them more easy to be acquired. Still however they are subject to faults, which nearly counterbalance their excellence; for they are weaker in expression, less harmonious and agreeable to the ear, and, as the construction of the words necessarily fixes them to particular situations in a sentence, they are less adapted to the uses of poetry.

Another very remarkable distinction prevails in *poetry*. Those effusions of fancy which the moderns express in rhyme, the ancients conveyed in metre. In the classic authors the quantity of words is fixed, the various combinations of long and short syllables give a pleasing variety to pronunciation, both in prose and verse, and render every word more distinct and harmonious to the ear. Rhyme was the invention of a dark and tasteless age, and is generally thought, when it predominates in the poetry of a language, as it does in the French, to indicate a want of strength and spirit. It is the glory of the English language to be capable of supporting blank verse; which the French, from its want of energy and vigour, cannot admit even in tragic composition.

Rhyme is frequently the source of redundancy and feebleness of expression; as even among the most

admired writers instances frequently occur of the sense being so much expanded, as to be on that account extremely weakened, because the poet is under the necessity of closing his couplets with corresponding sounds. The translation of Homer by Pope, and of Virgil by Dryden, afford striking proofs of the truth of this observation. The verbose passages in many of the finest tragedies of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, arise from the same cause. In rhyme the sense is usually closed with the first line, or at least with the second. This produces a tedious uniformity, which is particularly displeasing to those, whose ears are accustomed to the varied periods of the classic authors. Rhyme appears not so well adapted to grand and long, as to gay and short compositions. Its perpetual repetition in the *Henriade* of Voltaire is tiresome: in the stanzas of the *Fairy Queen* of Spencer its recurrence, although stated and uniform, is more tolerable, because the pauses are more varied: but it certainly is of all compositions best suited to the lively turn of an epigram, and the ludicrous descriptions of a mock-heroic. As a proof how little rhyme can contribute to the essential beauties of poetry, those persons are esteemed the best readers, who pay the least regard to its regular and stated return, and attend only to such pauses, as the sense of an author naturally points out. This may be considered as no slight proof of the comparative excellence of good blank verse, and the ancient metrical compositions.

A wider and more accurate survey of nature, and a more diligent cultivation of art, by gradually opening new channels of knowledge, have increased the number of words. Hence we find, that the moderns excel the ancients in copiousness of language upon many sub-

jects, of which abundant instances occur in the terms which express certain metals, semimetals, earths, plants, animals, amusements, and recreations, various machines, implements, and materials employed in agriculture, navigation, and chemistry. In several branches of science, in addition to all that was before ascertained, discoveries have been made, which were entirely unknown in ancient times.

This greater extent and variety of knowledge result from the operations of the spirit of enterprize, and the diligent ardour of research, which have explored new paths, and improved upon former discoveries. But it may abate the triumph of the moderns to reflect, that much of their superior knowledge may be the natural consequence of living in the *later* ages of the world. Future generations, if they are active and inquisitive, will possess the same ascendancy over the present; and the advancement of language will continue to be proportionate to the progress of the arts and sciences.

By tracing the variety of languages and alphabets to one source, we simplify subjects of curious inquiry; and we extricate ourselves from that perplexity, in which we should be involved, if we rejected an opinion so conformable to reason, and which the more accurate is our examination into ancient history, the more grounds we find to adopt. And it is a pleasing circumstance to observe, that while we maintain a system, supported by the most respectable profane authorities, we strengthen the arguments in favour of the *high antiquity* of the Jewish language, and corroborate, with respect to its origin, the relations of the *holy Scriptures*.

Our remarks likewise on the nature of language, both ancient and modern, and their comparative excel-

lence and defects, may lead to many useful inquiries and reflections, as the progress of human knowledge is so closely connected with the subject. The art of writing has been the great means of enlightening the understanding, and softening the manners, and the great instrument of improving social life, and strengthening its ties. To consider the advantages, which the improvement of languages, and of this art has conferred upon mankind, would open a boundless field of observation. Our range of remark would be equally vague and unprofitable, if we were to indulge the pleasing speculation of enlarging upon the numerous languages which have been, or are now spoken in the most civilized parts of the world. It belongs to our plan to confine our attention to subjects of more obvious utility, and to consider those languages only, which interest us on account of the people to whom they belong, and the information which they convey.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

THE impressions made by the conquerors who have settled in any particular nation are in few respects more clearly to be traced, than by the change they have produced in the language of the natives. This observation may be applied with peculiar propriety to our own country: for after the Saxons had subdued the Britons, they introduced into England their own language, which was a dialect of the Teutonic or Gothic. From the fragments of the Saxon laws, history, and poetry still extant, we have many proofs to convince us, that it was capable of expressing with a great degree of copiousness and energy the sentiments of a civilized people. For a period of six hundred years no considerable variation took place. William the Conqueror promoted another change of language, which had been begun by Edward the Confessor, and caused the Norman French to be used, both in his own palace, and in the courts of justice; and it became in a short time current among all the higher orders of his subjects. The constant intercourse which subsisted between France and England for several centuries, introduced a very considerable addition of terms; and they were adopted with very slight deviation from their original, as is evident from the works of our early writers, particularly Chaucer, Gower, and Wickliffe, and many other authors quoted by Warton in his curious and entertaining *History of English Poetry*. Such



were the grand sources of the English tongue: but the stream has been from time to time augmented by the copious influx of the Latin and other languages, with which the pursuits of commerce, the cultivation of learning, and the progress of the arts, have made our ancestors and ourselves acquainted.

The same countries, which have supplied the English with improvements, have furnished the various terms by which they are denoted. Music, sculpture, and painting, borrowed their expressions from Italy; the words used in navigation are taken from the inhabitants of Flanders and Holland; the French have supplied the expressions used in fortification and military affairs. The terms of mathematics and philosophy are borrowed from Latin and Greek. In the Saxon may be found all words of general use, as well as those which belong to agriculture, and the common mechanical arts.

But notwithstanding the English language can boast of so little simplicity as to its origin, yet in its grammatical construction it bears a close resemblance to Hebrew, the most simple language of antiquity. Its words depart less from the original form, than those of any other modern tongues. In the substantives there is but one variation of case; and it is only by the different degrees of comparison, that changes are made in the adjectives. There is only one conjugation of the verbs, some of which indeed are not varied at all, and others have only two or three changes of termination. Almost all the modifications of time are expressed by auxiliary verbs; and the verbs themselves preserve in many instances very nearly, and in some cases exactly, their radical form in the different tenses. The discriminating powers of these auxiliary verbs

are of great use in expressing the different moods. The article possesses a striking peculiarity, differing from that in most other languages, for it is indeclinable, and common to all genders. This simplicity of structure renders our language much easier to a learner than Italian or French, in which the variations of the verbs in particular are very numerous, complex, and difficult to be retained.

The English language is uniform in its composition, and its irregularities are far from being numerous. The distinctions in the genders of nouns are agreeable to the nature of things, and are not applied with that caprice, which prevails in many other languages. The order of construction is more easy and simple, than that of Latin and Greek; it has no genders of adjectives, nor any gerunds, supines, or variety of conjugations. These peculiarities give it a philosophical character; and as its terms are strong, expressive, and copious, no language seems better calculated to facilitate the intercourse of mankind, as a universal medium of communication.

Since the Grammars of Lowth and Priestly, and the Dictionary of Johnson have been published, our language has been brought nearer to a fixed standard. It is now considered, more than ever, as an object of grammatical rules, and regular syntax. Its idioms are more accurately ascertained by a comparison of passages selected from the best authors. The derivations are traced from their original sources with greater precision; and its orthography is now more reduced to settled rules. To the labours of *Johnson* as a *Lexicographer*, our nation is under great obligations; and if he has in some instances failed in diligence of research, or extent of plan, we must at least

be ready to allow, that he has contributed more than any of his countrymen towards the elucidation of his subject; he has given his definitions of words with great clearness, and confirmed them by a detail of quotations from the best authors. There is perhaps no book, professedly written upon a philological subject that can give to foreigners as well as to natives, so just and advantageous an idea of our language, or of the variety and the excellence of our writers; the Preface to his Dictionary is a most accurate and deservedly admired composition.

The derivation of English words, as far as it relates to Latin and Greek, has been frequently and satisfactorily traced: but those which are of Saxon origin were a long time prevalent without sufficient investigation. The Author of the "Diversions of Purley" (P. 185, &c.), whose natural acuteness and turn for metaphysical research peculiarly qualified him for such a task, has directed his attention to the subject; and the ingenious theory which he has formed, respecting the origin of the indeclinable parts of speech, was remarkably confirmed by his knowledge of Saxon. He has proved very clearly, that many of our adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions, which are commonly thought to have no signification, when detached from other words, are derived from obsolete verbs, or nouns, the meaning of which they respectively retain; but which have been shortened for general convenience, and corrupted by length of time. Such a discovery is valuable, not only on account of the light it throws upon those parts of our language which have been too slightly regarded by all former grammarians; but for the assistance it affords to the science of etymology in general.

Dr. Johnson has declaimed against *translations* as the bane of language: but Warton has observed, in the "History of English Poetry," on the contrary, that our language derived great benefits from the translations of the classics in the sixteenth century. This difference of opinion may probably be reconciled, by supposing that these writers advert to the state of a language at different periods of time. When it is in its dawn of improvement, as was the case when the translations of the classics were first made into English, the addition of foreign terms may be requisite to keep pace with the influx of new ideas. In a more advanced period of arts and civilization, such an increase is not only unnecessary, but may be injurious; and the practice seems as needless, as the introduction of foreign troops for the defence of a country, when the natives alone are sufficient for its protection.

#### I. BEAUTIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

A language, which has been so much indebted to others, both ancient and modern, must of course be very copious and expressive. In these respects perhaps it may be brought into competition with any now spoken in the world. No Englishman has had reason to complain, since our tongue has reached its present degree of excellence, that his ideas could not be adequately expressed, or clothed in a suitable dress. No author has been under the necessity of writing in a foreign language, on account of its superiority to our own. Whether we open the volumes of our divines, philosophers, historians, or artists, we shall find that they abound with all the terms necessary to communicate their observations and discoveries, and give to

their readers the most complete views of their respective subjects. Hence it appears, that our language is sufficiently capacious for all purposes, and can give proper and adequate expression to variety of argument, delicacy of taste, and fervour of genius. And that it has sufficient copiousness to communicate to mankind every action, event, invention, and observation, in a full, clear, and elegant manner, we can prove by an appeal to the authors, who are at present most admired and esteemed.

But its excellence is perhaps in few respects displayed to such advantage, as in the productions of our poets. Whoever reads the works of Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, will be sensible that they employ a kind of phraseology which may be said to be sacred to the Muses. It is distinguished from prose, not merely by the harmony of numbers, but by the great variety of its appropriate terms and phrases. A considerable degree of beauty results likewise from the different measures employed in poetry. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso* of Milton, *Alexander's feast* by Dryden, the *Ode to the Passions* by Collins, and the *Bard* of Gray, are as complete examples of versification, judiciously varied, according to the nature of the subjects, as they are specimens of exquisite sentiment and original genius.

One of the most beautiful figures in poetry is the *Prosopopoeia*, or personification, which ascribes personal qualities and actions to inanimate and fictitious beings. The genius of our language enables the English poet to give the best effect to this figure, as the genders of nouns are not arbitrarily imposed, but may be varied according to the nature of the subject. Thus the poet can establish the most striking distinction between

verse and prose, and communicate to his descriptions that spirit and animation, which cannot fail to delight every reader of taste, in the following passages.

Thus Collins, in his Ode on Thomson, who was buried at Richmond, in a train of imagery at once beautiful and original, declares, that—

“ Remembrance oft shall *haunt* the shore  
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,  
And oft *suspend* the dashing oar,  
To *bid* his gentle spirit rest.”

Milton thus personifies Wisdom,

—— “ Wisdom’s self  
Oft *seeks* to sweet retired solitude,  
Where with her best nurse Contemplation,  
She *plumes* her feathers, and *lets grow* her wings,  
That in the various bustle of resort,  
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired,”  
Par. Lost.

And Warton describes the advance of Evening:

“ While Evening *veil’d* in shadows brown  
*Puts her* matron mantle on,  
And mists in spreading streams convey  
More fresh the fumes of new-mown hay;  
Then Goddess guide my pilgrim feet  
Contemplation hoar to meet,  
As slow *he winds* in museful mood,  
Near the rush’d marge of Cherwell’s flood.”

Warton’s Ode on the Approach of Summer.

But the fullest display of this figure occurs in the Fairy Queen of Spenser, which abounds in the continued personification of abstract ideas.

We must however acknowledge, that it is chiefly to grave subjects—to the details of the historian, the arguments of the politician and the divine, the specu-

lations of the philosopher, and the invention of the epic and the tragic poet, that our expressions are best adapted. Our language has energy and copiousness; but it accords not so well with the mirth of the gay, or the pathos of the distressed, as some others. In describing the pleasantries of the mind, in the effusions of delicate humour, and the trifling levities of social intercourse, the French possess a decided advantage. In delineating the tender passions, the soothing of pity, and the ardour of love, we must yield the superiority to the softer cadence of Italian syllables.

## II. DEFECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

Although it is natural to indulge a partiality to our native language, as well as to our native soil; yet this prepossession ought not to make us blind to the defects either of the one or the other. We shall only advert to the principal imperfections of the language. Most of the words, except such as are of Roman or Grecian origin, are monosyllables terminated by consonants; and this makes our pronunciation rugged and broken, and unlike the regular and easy flow of classic phraseology. Many of them are harsh and inharmonious; and there are some syllables, which can scarcely be pronounced by an Italian or a Frenchman, whose organs of speech are habituated to softer expressions. "It is to the terminations with consonants that the harshness of our language may be imputed. The melody of a language depends greatly upon its vowel terminations. In English not more than a dozen common words end in *a*: about two dozen end in *o*. In *y* we have no less than 4900 words, about an eighth of our language; our words amounting to about 35,000. Heron's letters, p. 247.

The want of different terminations in verbs, as it introduces the frequent use of auxiliary verbs, too frequently obliges us to express our meaning by circumlocutions. There is no distinction in the persons of the plural number of -verbs, nor in the tenses of persons of the passive voice. This is oftentimes the cause of ambiguity; and foreigners, in the perusal of our books, must be very much at a loss, without the closest attention to the preceding and subsequent parts of sentences, to understand the particular sense of many passages. Our accents are calculated to give considerable variety to pronunciation; but the prevailing mode of throwing them back, in some cases, to the first syllable of a word, in a great degree destroys their use; and gives an indistinct, hurried, and almost unintelligible sound to the other syllables. None of the modern languages of Europe are so strongly marked by accents as our own. Their peculiar advantage is evident in poetry, as we are enabled to support the varied numbers of blank verse; and this circumstance gives us a decided superiority over the French. Zealous as some authors have been to establish the excellence of English with respect to quantity, and to prove that it is in itself harmonious and musical, we must, after all their ingenious arguments, be obliged to leave to the Greeks and Latins the regular and uniform distinctions of long and short syllables; for although there are many of our words which we can affirm to be long or short; yet a great number of them cannot be said to be of any determinate quantity. Warton on Pope, Vol I, p. 305.

The mode of *spelling* appears to have been in former times extremely vague and unsettled. It is not uncommon to find in our old writers the same word



spelt differently, even in the same page. Orthography began to be more an object of attention, and was rescued from its great uncertainty, at the beginning of the last century. Yet authors of considerable eminence have differed much from each other in their modes of spelling some particular words, and have adjusted their practice to their own ideas of propriety. This has given a very stiff and pedantic appearance to their writings. Nor has the influence of their authority had any effect upon the prevailing customs, or rescued them from the imputation of singularity and affectation. Dr. Lardner was desirous of reviving the old mode of spelling in some instances, as in *goodnesse, forgivenessse, &c.* Benson, a commentator on St. Paul's Epistles, wrote *praface, prafix, pravail, procede, persue, and explane*, like Lardner. Dr. Middleton, a more elegant writer, attempted similar innovations; and Upton, the learned commentator on Shakspeare, tires his readers by the repetitions of the word *tast* for the substantive taste.

Our orthography remained in this fluctuating state, till at length what was the general wish, what many had attempted in vain, and what seemed to require the united efforts of numbers, was accomplished by the diligence and the acuteness of one man. "Dr. Johnson published his Dictionary; and as the weight of truth and reason is irresistible, its authority has nearly fixed the external form of our language, and from its decisions few appeals have yet been made. Indeed so convenient is it to have one acknowledged standard to recur to—so much preferable, in matters of this nature, is a trifling degree of irregularity to a continual change, and fruitless pursuit of unattainable perfection, *that it is earnestly to be hoped, that no author will*

henceforth on slight grounds be tempted to innovate. Dr. Johnson is every where the declared enemy of unnecessary innovation. The principles on which he founds his improvements are the stable ones of etymology and analogy: the former science will not soon be more completely understood than it was by him; and if in the latter a few steps may have been made beyond the limits of his observation, they have been gained only by the pursuit of minute researches, inconsistent with the greatness of his undertaking." Nares's *Orthoepy*, p. 269.

It is the opinion of this learned Lexicographer, that as we received many of our words originally of Latin derivation, through the medium of the French, we ought to follow the latter mode of spelling in preference to the former. Good as this general rule may be thought, there are some exceptions, which in compliance with prevailing custom he readily admits himself. "The rule required him to write *enquire* from the French *enquerir*, not *inquire*. The termination in *our* is one of those which has created much dispute. At present the practice seems to favour the rejection of *u* in all words of more than two syllables. Johnson spells *author* without a final *u*, but always writes *honour* and *favour*. Nares, p. 276.

It may be laid down as a *general rule*, that the most judicious attention that can be paid to orthography, must necessarily consist in distinguishing those irregularities which are inherent in the *language itself*, from those introduced by the *capricious*, the *fashionable*, and the *ignorant*.

The preceding observations have chiefly related to words considered by themselves. It may be proper, in the next place, to make some remarks upon our compo-

sition, or the arrangement and connexion of words, as they constitute sentences. In this respect all modern languages fall short of the ancient, which are distinguished by a peculiar roundness, harmony, and compass of period. The Greeks and Romans, by having different genders and terminations of their verbs and nouns, gave a precision to their meaning, which enabled them to diversify the order of construction, in an infinite variety of modes, without any injury to the general sense. Of this advantage our language is in a great degree incapable, by reason of the simplicity of its structure. It will indeed admit of the transposition of the members of a sentence; but the transposition of words, except in poetry, seems to be contrary to its genius. Our words in general are placed in the natural order of construction; and to this standard we endeavour to reduce both our literal and free translations of Greek and Latin authors: in the works of our writers we seek in vain for that condenseness of ideas, for those close and connected parts of a sentence, and that judicious position of the principal idea in the most advantageous place, which have so striking an effect in the composition of the classics.

### III. SIR T. BROWNE—DR. JOHNSON—MR. GIBBON.

The cultivation of the learned languages, since the reign of Henry VIII has introduced many words of Latin origin into the conversation and the writings of the English. The attention paid to Italian literature, particularly in the reign of Elizabeth, contributed to increase their number. In the works of Shakspeare we find many such words; and those, which his *imperfect knowledge* of Latin and Greek did not afford him

the opportunity of taking immediately from the classics, he probably borrowed from the same translations, which furnished many of his plots, speeches and characters.\* Yet he seems to have considered the too free admission of this strange phraseology as an object of occasional censure, and has therefore exposed it to ridicule with great effect in the ludicrous characters of Holofernes and Pistol. The dramatic productions of Ben Jonson, his contemporary, are much more strongly marked by these exotic conceits. But of all our writers of those times no one seems to have been so ambitious of the stiff and pompous decorations of a latinised style, as Sir Thomas Browne, the author of "the Vulgar Errors." His sentences are so replete with words, which differ only from Latin in their terminations, that he is entitled to the first place in the school of pedantry. It is very extraordinary, that the force of his own observation, which was levelled against those who indulged in this practice, recoils with the greatest force upon himself. "If elegancie still precedeth, and English pens maintain that stream we have of late observed to flow from many, we shall within few years be faine to learne Latine to understand English, and a work will prove of equal facility in either." Preface to the Vulgar Errors.

The affected structure of his style is apparent even from the first sentence of the above mentioned work. "Would truth dispense, we could be content with Plato, that knowledge were but remembrance, that intellectual acquisition were but reminiscential evocation, &c." That many of his words may be translated into

\* For a very curious List of these Translations, see Farmer's Essay on the learning of Shakspeare.

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Latin with little more than a change in their terminations, the following passages will show. "Scintillations are not the accension of the air upon the collision of two hard bodies, but rather the inflammable effluences discharged from the bodies collided." "Ice is figured in its guttulous descent from the air, and grows greater or lesser according unto the accresion or pluvius aggelation about the mother and fundamental atoms thereof." P. 40, 41.

There is sufficient reason to suppose that Dr. Johnson formed his style upon the model of Sir T. Browne. He has written his life; has quoted in his Dictionary many of his words, unsupported by any other authority; and perhaps in his works it would not be difficult to trace some marks of direct imitation.

Between the opinions and the practice of Johnson there is a striking inconsistency; for in the Preface to his Dictionary, he regrets that our language had been for some time gradually departing from its ancient Teutonic character; and yet in his works, particularly in the Rambler, he promotes this departure in the most studious manner. From the writer of an English Dictionary might naturally be expected a close adherence to idiom; and that he would mark the line of distinction very strongly between such words and phrases as were unsupported by sufficient authority, and such as had been fully sanctioned by the usage of the best authors. And from a writer, whose professed purpose it was to recommend the beauties of moral truth to the different ranks of the public at large, and render topics of criticism intelligible and popular, we should expect few modes of expression, which are pedantic or affected. Whether we consider the nature of his essays, or the general use for which they were

intended, it must be evident, that such subjects call for peculiar perspicuity of expression. Johnson seems to have judged the style of Addison more worthy of praise, than proper for his imitation.\* Our literature indeed dates a new era from the publication of his works: and some of the words he uses, if they were not of his own coining, are rarely to be met with in former writers.† By endeavouring to avoid low and familiar expressions, he is frequently lofty and turgid; and to a reader unacquainted with the learned languages, must sometimes be wholly unintelligible. His new modes of expression, involution of periods, frequent use of the substantive instead of the adjective, and stated introduction of triads, are peculiarities, if not innovations, which have drawn after him a train of imitators. Some of them are indeed entitled to praise on account of their possessing sufficient judgment to keep their style in constant subserviency to their thoughts; and others have exposed themselves to ridicule by the ludicrous association of pompous words with feeble and trite ideas.

If our subject required us to weigh the general merits of this celebrated author, as well as to remark

\* "Whoever wishes to acquire a style which is familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." "Life of Addison."

† I allude to such words as *Resuscitation, orbity, fatuity, divaricate, asinine, narcotic, vulnerary, empireumatic, obtund, disruption, crematian, horticulture, germination, decussation, excimious, &c.*

Where did T. Warton find such words as *doctorated, fugacious*; or Bolingbroke such as *incumberment, martyrsied, eucharisty, connexity, platonician, stoician*; or Shaftesbury such compounds as *self-end, self-passion, kome-dialect, and mirror-writing*; or Arthur Young his expressive term *acclimated*?

the peculiarities of his style, we should readily concur in the commendation bestowed upon his transcendent abilities, and acknowledge, that the energy of his language was oftentimes a sufficient apology for his elaborate pomp; and that our censure must in some degree abate its severity, when we consider the force and the discrimination of his terms, the correctness, variety, and splendor of his imagery, the power of his understanding, his love of virtue and religion, and his zeal for their promotion, so extremely well adapted to the different characters he sustained in the literary world as a moralist, a philologist, and a critic.

In the course of our remarks upon this subject, Gibbon, the historian of "the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," claims some share of our attention. It is a great misfortune for the public, and particularly for the younger part of his readers, considering the great popularity of his works, that he has concealed the poison of infidelity under a honied sweetness of style. Skilled in all the arts of declamation, and studious to please and to amuse us at the expense of correctness of taste, he has confounded the diction of a *poet* with that of an *historian*. And his arrangement of sentences is frequently so much alike, and they are formed in so mechanical a manner, that they seem to have been constructed according to one particular rule. Although many of his characters are finely drawn, and many of his descriptions are lively and beautiful; yet his verboseness frequently fatigues the attention, and his obscurity perplexes it. He endeavours, and often with unsuccessful pains, to give dignity to trifles, and to adorn every subject, whether trivial or important, with the flowery ornaments of description. In various instances he must offend the judgment of those who

wish to see the different kinds of composition confined within their due limits, and more particularly expect, that an historian should not depart, either in point of dignity of character, or propriety of expression, from the rules of correct composition. A careful reader of Gibbon will observe, that his affectation oftentimes renders his meaning very obscure; that he deviates from the genius of our language by the frequent transposition of the members of his sentences, and by using words in new and unauthorised senses; by borrowing French ornaments of style, and by sometimes adopting the French idiom.

It is not easy to estimate how much the Scotch writers have contributed to the value and the importance of literature. In the various departments of Poetry, Criticism, History, Philosophy, and Science, they have exerted themselves with no less diligence than talents. We should deservedly be regarded as too fastidious and rigid, if we were to criticise their mode of expression with too much severity. We may however be allowed to observe, that their *first* publications are often marked by those Scotticisms, or national peculiarities, which are in succeeding editions expunged. Hume, Robertson, and Blair, by careful revisions have refined and polished their works, which have very high pretensions to occupy a place next to that of the English classics.

We are the more desirous of pointing out the defects of Johnson and Gibbon on account of their great reputation. We ought not to be dazzled with the splendour of their names; and as we are ready to give due praise to their beauties, it cannot fairly be required that we should palliate, or conceal their defects.



If writers will contribute to make our language unnecessarily more parti-coloured and motley than it was before; if they deliberately add to its corruptions, and hasten its decline, they are just objects of censure; and unless their deviations from its idiom be remarked and avoided, how can the distinction between a pure and a vitiated style be preserved? Without attention to some rules, without a proper discrimination between bad and good models, the language will degenerate, and the sterling ore of the English tongue will finally lose its value, its weight, and its lustre, by being mixed with foreign words and idioms, and the alloy of learned affectation.

## THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

### CHAPTER III.

OUR language ought to be considered not only with a view to its grammatical propriety, but as a subject of taste. In order to avoid the errors of those who have been led astray by affectation and false refinement, and to form a proper opinion of its genuine idiom, it is necessary to peruse the works of the best and most approved writers.

In the various departments of religion, history, poetry, and general literature, we will endeavour to point out some writers of the purest English—but without any wish to detract from the merits of those, whom the limited nature of our work, and not an insensibility or an ignorance of their merit, may make it necessary for us to omit.

Let the reader commence his studies with those who were most distinguished in the reign of Elizabeth, when the language began to be refined from its original roughness, assumed a fuller form, and was marked by more distinct features; and let him pursue his progress down to the present times. Nor ought he to be deterred from this design by an apprehension, that he will find the old authors clothed in the garb of rude and uncouth antiquity; for he will make the pleasing discovery, that the language of his forefathers differs little from his own, in point of structure and formation, and the general meaning of words.

The *Substance* of a language remains for ages unaltered, however the influx of new customs, and the inventions or the improvements of arts, may occasion some addition to its terms, and some change in its orthography and pronunciation. Shakspeare will of course attract his early attention; and he will find in his incomparable dramas such an accommodation of style to the grave and the gay, the rough and the polished, the heroic and the vulgar characters of his plays, as shows that our language was sufficiently strong and copious to be a proper vehicle for the conceptions of his vast and wonderful genius. The works of Speed, Ascham, Raleigh, Clarendon, and Temple, are highly to be valued for the vigour and compass of their diction, as well as the display of extensive knowledge and eminent abilities. The common translation of the Bible, exclusive of the important nature of its contents, deserves great attention. The nature and compass of its phraseology are such, as prove no less the powers of the language, than the correct judgment of the translators. The words are for the most part elegant and expressive, and convey the sublime ideas of the original, without coarseness or familiarity on the one hand, or pedantry and affectation on the other. The manly and dignified prose, and the rich and sublime poetry of Milton, far from being degraded or fettered, are exalted and adorned by their style; and it was his peculiar glory, to apply with consummate taste and skill the flowing and unshackled periods of blank verse, to the majesty of an epic poem. The increasing tribute of praise has in every age subsequent to his own been paid to the stores of his vast erudition, and the flights of his transcendent genius.

In the reign of Charles II the reader will find no author more worthy of his attention than Barrow, whose periods are so full and exuberant, as to give no inadequate representation of the eloquence of Cicero. He exhausts every subject which he undertakes to discuss, leaving nothing but admiration of the boundless fertility of his mind, to the writers who follow him upon the same topics. They display to the greatest advantage the energy of his intellectual powers, employed upon the most important subjects of morality and religion.

The great Locke, in a plain and severe style, well adapted to the philosophical precision of his researches, unravelled the intricacies of the most interesting branch of philosophy by tracing ideas to their source, and developing the faculties of the mind. In the illustrious reign of Anne, when Britian reached a degree of glory in literature and arts, which might be put in competition with the age of Pericles, or Augustus; Swift in clear and familiar diction, unaided by flowery ornaments, expressed the dictates of a strong understanding, and lively invention. Addison, the accomplished scholar, the refined critic, and the enlightened moralist, like another Socrates, brought moral philosophy from the schools, arrayed her in the most engaging dress, and called the attention of his countrymen to taste and to virtue, in his elegant and entertaining essays. The prefaces of Dryden are marked by the ease and the vivacity of genius; and there is a facility in his rhymes, and a peculiar vigour in his poetry, which render him justly the boast of our country. Pope composed his prefaces and letters with peculiar grace and beauty of style; and his poems present the finest specimens of exquisite judgment, adorned by the most *harmonious and polished* versification.

The works of Melmoth, particularly his letters and translations of Cicero and Pliny, are remarkable for smoothness and elegance of composition. The Lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds illustrate the principles of his delightful art, in a manner no less creditable to him as a fine writer, than as an eminent painter, and connoisseur. The sacred discourses of the amiable Horne recommend the duties of that holy religion, of which he was so bright an ornament, in a sweet and lively style. The manly vigour of Bishop Watson diffuses its animation through all his works, whether philosophical, controversial, or religious. And where can we find compositions, which unite the politeness of the gentleman with the attainments of the scholar blended in juster proportions, than in the Polymetis of Spence, the Athenian Letters, the Dialogues of Lord Littleton and Bishop Hurd, and the papers of the Adventurer, and the Observer?

These are some of the principal sources, from which may be derived a proper knowledge of the purity, the strength, and the copiousness of the English language. Such are the examples by which our style ought to be regulated. In them may be remarked the idiomatic structure of sentences, and the proper arrangements of their parts. They present specimens of purity without stiffness, and elegance without affectation; they are free both from pomp and vulgarity of diction, and their authors have the happy art of pleasing our taste, while they improve our understandings, and confirm our principles of morality and religion.

In the course of this perusal it will be found, that in proportion as the great controversies upon religion, politics, and philosophy, began to subside since the *time of the Revolution*, a greater attention has been paid

to the niceties of grammar and criticism; and coarse and barbarous phraseology has been gradually polished into propriety and elegance.

As the practice of writing for public inspection has been much improved since the period above mentioned a remarkable change has taken place. The long parenthesis, which so frequently occurs in the older writers, to the great embarrassment and perplexity of their meaning, has fallen much into disuse. It has been observed that it is no where to be found in the writings of Johnson. Authors have shortened their sentences, which, in some of the best writers of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century, were extended to an excessive length: and they have stated their thoughts to much more advantage by separating them from each other, and expressing them with greater distinctness. Whether this circumstance may not argue a want of fertility of ideas, and a tardiness of conception, it is not our business to inquire. The custom of writing in short sentences must be allowed to detract from roundness of period, and dignity of composition: but it certainly contributes so materially to perspicuity, which is the prime excellence of style, that it cannot fail to make every reader satisfied with the change.

#### I. CONVERSATION AND PRONUNCIATION.

Our remarks have been generally applied to the English, considered as a written language: but books have a much more extensive use than merely to regulate the practice of writers; for they are calculated to correct the errors of conversation, and communicate both accuracy and purity to social intercourse. There

will always be less variation of speech prevailing among the natives of different provinces, and less vulgarity of dialect, in proportion as well written books are circulated and perused. But the standard of the language ought always to continue the same; it should consist in a compliance with general rules, and the practice of the polished ranks of society. Such regulations at once rescue it from the caprice of individuals, and establish a barrier against the encroachments of commercial idiom, professional phraseology, vulgarity, ignorance and pedantry.

The correct speaker rejects local and provincial forms of expression, for those which are general. He converses neither in the dialect of Somersetshire, nor of Norfolk; but in that elegant phraseology which has received the sanction of the best company. He neither countenances by his approbation, nor authorises by his practice, new fashioned phrases, or upstart words, that have only novelty to recommend them; whether they are introduced by the great or the vulgar, the learned or the ignorant. Upon these occasions a good taste will prove the surest guide. He conforms to idiom and analogy; and at the same time that he confesses his obligations to learned men for their labours in attempting to reduce his native language to a fixed standard, he forgets not, what it is of great importance for an Englishman ever to recollect, that the "pure wells of English undefiled" are supplied by a Teutonic source; and that the genius of the British language disdains to be encroached upon by arbitrary and foreign innovations.

Those who write only for the present times labour to adorn their style with modish phrases. A popular speaker, and particularly a member of the House of

Commons, enjoys a kind of privilege to coin as many words as he pleases; and they no sooner receive the sanction of his authority than they intrude upon us from every quarter in letters, plays, and periodical publications. But such words resemble the flies that are seen sporting in the sun only for a day, and afterwards appear no more. The people of fashion, ever fickle and fond of novelty, are as prompt to reject as they were to adopt them; and they seldom long survive the occasion that gave them birth.

In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold,  
Alike fantastic, if too new or old.  
Be not the first by whom the new are try'd,  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

We cannot forbear to join in the complaint which foreigners make, that our pronunciation is much at variance with our orthography. The practice of the court and the stage has multiplied these variations, which have been too eagerly adopted in the higher ranks of society. Agreeableness of sound is often assigned as a reason for this practice; but in many words two consonants are pronounced instead of one, which surely cannot give additional melody to a word: \* the irregularities in our language are sufficiently numerous, without making this addition to them. Fortunately indeed, the people at large are not influenced by the changes of fashion, but long adhere to established and ancient usages; and therefore among them we must look for that uniformity of writing and speaking,

\* As in the modish pronunciation of *nature*, *superior*, *education*, *insuperable*, &c. &c.



which persons in the higher ranks of life too frequently sacrifice to caprice, and a love of distinction and novelty.

We here conclude our observations on a language, which by the commerce, the conquests, and the colonies of the English, is at present well known in every quarter of the globe. Its reputation seems to increase more and more, as it is of late years become the favourite study of all those foreigners who wish to complete a liberal education. And indeed it may be said, without partiality or exaggeration, to merit their particular attention; since it contains some of the choicest treasures of the human mind, and is the vehicle of such intellectual vigour, such energy of thought, warmth of imagination, depth of erudition, and research of philosophy, as can with difficulty be equalled in any other nation.

The prevalence and flourishing state of our language depend not solely upon the inhabitants of the British dominions in Europe. In many of the islands of the West Indies it is cultivated with diligence. Our extensive and still increasing settlements in the East Indies promise to insure its preservation, and open a spacious field for its wider diffusion. The United States of America cannot fail to perpetuate the language of their parent country; and the spirit of literary and scientific investigation, which is rising among them, will conduce to this end; since it will encourage the study of those celebrated productions, from which the Americans have gained their knowledge of the best system of legislation, and their most correct principles of liberty.

When we consider the uncertainty and the fluctuating nature of all human affairs, and particularly the great mutability of language, we cannot help giving way to the melancholy reflection, that the time may

arrive, when the English, which at present appears so durable and permanent, as the standard of conversation and writing, will become obsolete. The caprices of fashion, the wide extent of our commerce, the general intercourse with other nations, and more particularly the predominant influence of the French language, may produce great changes; and Hume and Johnson, Pope and Goldsmith, may become what Speed and Ascham, Chaucer and Phaer, are at present. For the honour, however, both of true taste and the good sense of mankind, we may presume to expect, that the volumes of English literature and science will not sink into oblivion;—but that the language, in which they are written, celebrated for the choicest productions, and ranked with the classical tongues of Greece and Rome, will be reserved for general improvement and pleasure, and will convey the works of genius, learning, and philosophy, to the most distant ages and generations.\*

\* Perhaps it would dispel the melancholy reflections and forebodings of the reverend author if he knew that the English language is spoken abroad with as much propriety as in the university of Oxford; and that it is the written language of a greater portion of the earth than any language ancient or modern. Of all living languages the English promises to be the most general. Editor.

#### CHAPTER IV.

### THE LATIN LANGUAGE.

A KNOWLEDGE of this language introduced us to many of those works, which are deservedly classed among the most elegant productions of the human mind, and are considered as some of the most correct models of literary excellence. If we estimate its comparative value and importance, it claims a place immediately after our own tongue; as not only the Roman writers have made it the vehicle of their genius, but it has been distinguished since the revival of learning, by the productions of many eminent authors.

The utility of an acquaintance with this language will be more immediately apparent, if we consider how much our own is indebted to it for many of the terms of art and science, as well as for most of our polysyllables. Without the aid, indeed, of the words which it supplies, it is not only difficult to understand our older Authors, but to write or speak even a sentence of elegant English; so that when a scholar is engaged in studying the Latin, he is in fact making himself a more perfect master of his own language. It is equally useful, if he wishes to acquire the French, the Italian, and the Spanish, as it constitutes so material a part of those elegant tongues. It is the prolific mother of many children; and whatever difference may prevail among them with respect to the various countries, in which they are settled, or the foreign alliances they

have formed; they discover the parent from which they sprang, by the most striking similarity of features.\*

Considered with respect to its *origin*, the Latin language derived many words from the Etruscans and Sabines: it is however, for the most part, a very ancient branch of the Greek, and is chiefly formed from the Doric and Eolic dialects. A colony of Arcadians under Enotrus are said to have introduced it into Italy many centuries before the Trojan war. As it was separated from the mother tongue at so very early a period, it was deficient in that melody and sweetness which the other dialects acquired, when Greek afterwards reached its greatest perfection.

Not only innumerable terms, but the ancient forms of the Roman letters, prove the origin of the language to have been Grecian. From the same source it derived progressive improvements. The first Latin poets, Pacuvius, Ennius, and Plautus, modelled their works upon the Grecian plan, as is particularly evident from their frequent use of compound words. As soon as the art of public speaking began to be cultivated in Rome, the Greek language, which contained some of the richest treasures of eloquence, became a favourite object of pursuit; and Athens was frequented by the Roman youth of fortune and family, as the best and most approved seminary of education. The attention which was paid to the productions of Greece by the Romans when advancing towards refinement, sufficiently marks the high estimation in which their literature was held. Cato, the celebrated Censor, at a late period of life learned the elements of that language; and Pompey, as a mark of distinguished respect to a

\* This observation applies to the Spanish and Italian languages.

Greek philosopher, lowered his consular fasces to Posidonius the sophist, whom he visited in his school at Rhodes. Greece was to Rome, what Egypt had been in more remote times to Greece, the fruitful parent of her literature and arts.

The Latin yields the superiority to the Greek language, not only with regard to melody of sound, but compass of expression. It has no dual number, and has only one tense to denote the past perfect, which does not express whether the action still continues to be carried on: but the Greek can express this equally by the preterperfect, and the aorist. The Latin has not a past participle active: whereas in Greek there are two, namely, the participle of the aorist, and the preterperfect. It wants likewise a present participle passive, which reduces writers to great inconvenience, and occasions much awkwardness and uncertainty of expression. It is deficient in a middle voice, and an optative mood, marked by a peculiar termination, to distinguish it from the subjunctive.

It is not easy to give a satisfactory reason why the Romans did not, in imitation of the Greeks, introduce *the article* into their language. This is one of its striking defects. The importance of the article in fixing the meaning of a word to a precise idea will appear from the following, or any similar instance. Suppose in Latin the words *Filius Regis* to occur in any author: Do they mean *a son of a King, the son of a King, or the son of the King?* each of which expressions conveys a very different idea. The exact sense of *Filius Regis* must entirely depend upon the context; as the expression is in itself vague and indefinite. The modern languages of Europe have the advantage over the Latin in this part of speech, however inferior they may be to it in other respects.

In the different inflections and terminations of words, as well as in the delicate and pleasing denominations of objects by diminutives, Greek and Latin bear a strong resemblance to each other. The Latin possesses the advantage of compound words, but in a degree that will hardly admit of comparison with the Greek. It is equally happy in denoting by particular verbs the frequent repetition or commencement of actions; and it is more accurate in its power of expressing certain modifications of time by gerunds and supines.

With respect to composition, the productions of the Latin classics are ranked next in order of excellence to those of the Greek. The polished writers of Rome, disdaining to follow the plain and inartificial manner of their older authors, imitated the varied pauses and harmonious flow of Grecian periods. The choice of arrangement allowed them by the happy genius of their language, produced a remarkable difference between the familiar and the formal style. In his *Epistles* and *Satires*, Horace is careless and easy: in his *Odes* he indulges in more flowing and more complex periods. Cicero in his letters is loose and negligent; but in many of his *Orations* and philosophical works, he is more exact in his construction of words, and more studiously correct.

In one kind of arrangement the Romans were inferior to their great masters, as they so frequently terminated their sentences with verbs. This practice sometimes runs through several sentences together, with no small degree of tiresome uniformity; as is evident from many passages in the history of Livy, the *Orations* of Cicero, and the *Commentaries* of Cæsar. In defence however of this custom it may be remarked,

that as the action expressed by the verb is frequently the most emphatic idea, it might be thought most consistent with the genius of their composition, to place it at the close of the period, for the purpose of more effectually keeping up the attention of the hearer or reader.

From considering the beauties of composition so conspicuous in the works of the classic authors, we must be sensible of the unfavourable light, in which they appear when viewed through the medium of *translations*. They are exposed to the vanity, the negligence, or the ignorance of the translator; and are liable to be injured by his fastidiousness, or his want of taste. The sense of an original work may be debased by servile fidelity of version, or enervated by unrestrained freedom of expression; it may be dilated into a commentary, or compressed into an abridgment.

Sometimes a translator flatters himself he can improve upon his original, as is attempted in the following instance. Virgil describes Venus after her appearance to *Aeneas* as visiting Paphos:

—“*Ubi templum illi, centumque Sabæ  
Thure calent aræ, sertisque recentibus halant.*”

For which a French translator substitutes these lines:

*Dan ce Temple ou toujours quelque amant irrité,  
Accuse dans ses vœux quelque jeune beauté.”*

Because he thinks this description is more characteristic of the Temple of Venus than that given by Virgil, which he says will apply equally well to the

Temples of other Deities. Had he understood the spirit of the passage, and known that as blood was never shed upon the altar of the Paphian goddess, its *peculiar* ornaments were garlands of flowers, he might have spared himself the pains of endeavouring to *improve* upon Virgil. Dryden has sometimes taken the liberty of substituting one image for another in his Translation of Virgil, but with singular propriety and spirit. Take for instance the beautiful apostrophe to Nisus and Euryalus:

O happy friends ! for if my verse can give  
Immortal life, your fame shall ever live,  
Fix'd as the Capitol's foundation lies,  
*And spread where'er the Roman Eagle flies.\**

"Dryden saw that closeness best preserved an Author's sense, and that freedom best exhibited his spirit. He therefore will deserve the highest praise, who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who, when he translates, changes nothing but the language." Johnson's Idler, No. 69.

But after all, may we not apply to translations, the remark made by Philip of Macedon to a person who prided himself upon imitating the notes of the nightingale? *I prefer the nightingale herself.*

The defects and difficulties of the translator are increased by the inferiority of his language. The classics are characterised by a native elegance and dignity of thought, a peculiar precision of style, a copious

- \* "Fortunati ambo, si quid mea carmina possint !  
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo,  
Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum  
Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit."



flow of period, and a regular construction of sentence : in addition to which their poetical works are adorned with the harmony of numbers, and the various beauties of metrical versification. The modern languages possess some of these beauties in an inferior degree, and of others they are totally destitute. If therefore the flowers of eloquence and poetry, which bloom in the fields of Cicero and Virgil, be transplanted into a less genial soil, and a colder climate, their vigour declines, and they lose the brightness of their colours, and the richness of their fragrance.

The fragments of the annals of the pontiffs, and the laws of the Twelve tables, are sufficient to prove the rude and imperfect state of the Latin language, during the early times of the republic. Two of the first historians of Rome composed their works in Greek : and even Brutus the contemporary of Cicero, wrote his epistles in the same language. That great orator wrote a Greek commentary on his own consulship ; and his friend Atticus produced a similar work upon the same subject. The Latin was not only for a considerable time an unpolished, but a defective language. Its poverty of expression was a subject of complaint, as soon as it began to be regularly studied. Cicero and Lucretius were sensible of the want of terms adapted to Philosophical topics. Even the names of physics, dialectics, and rhetoric, were unknown before the former of these authors introduced them into his works ; and the latter laments that his native tongue was not calculated to communicate, with adequate strength and copiousness of expression, the wonders and the beauties of Grecian philosophy. Its defects were not so great, when applied to subjects more congenial to the manners of the Romans. From their constant occupations in domes-

tic and foreign wars for many centuries, their language took a deep and peculiar tincture, and the marks of it were evident from many modes of expression. *Virtus*, for instance, denotes virtue as well as courage; *Exercitus*, which signifies an army, conveys likewise in its original import the idea of any kind of corporeal exercise; *Imperator* originally appropriated to a general, was afterwards applied to the supreme civil magistrate of the empire; and the term *Hostis*, which was employed in contradistinction to a native of Rome, in its primary meaning denoted a stranger. Cicero de Officiis, lib. i, c. 12. The Roman gentlemen were denominated *Equites*, which had a reference to the military service performed on horseback by persons of their quality, in the early ages of the commonwealth, when a soldier and a citizen were the same.

### I. LATIN CLASSICS.

It might naturally enough be supposed, on comparing the comedies of Plautus with those of Terence, and the Poems of Lucretius with Virgil, that they had lived at the distance of several centuries from each other: and yet they were in reality separated by no long interval of time. Plautus flourished about thirty years before Terence, and Virgil about fifty after Lucretius. The rapid progress of the Latin tongue to perfection will appear less extraordinary, when we remark the labour bestowed upon its cultivation by persons as eminent for their taste and learning, as for their rank and talents. Scipio Africanus was the assistant of Terence in his comic productions; and Cicero and Cæsar promoted the improvement and refine-

ment of their language, not only by examples of correctness in their inimitable writings, but by composing treatises of grammar.

All the Latin authors, who were remarkable for purity and elegance of diction, flourished within the space of a century and a half, viz. from the time of Scipio Africanus to the death of Augustus. During that auspicious period, it was evident with what great success the Roman language could be adapted to every species of composition. The prose writer expanded his ideas in flowing periods, or condensed them into concise sentences. The poet adapted the various kinds of metre to the melodious notes of the lyre, or, aided by the fancied inspiration of the epic muse, poured forth the more regular numbers of heroic song.

The purest, and as it is sometimes called the golden age of Latin composition, commenced with **TERENCE**, who introduced the characters of his elegant comedies, conversing in terse and perspicuous language. **LUCRETIUS** gave to the Epicurean philosophy the wild but captivating charms of a vigorous fancy, and nervous expression. His versification is sometimes rough and unpolished, and sometimes rises into so much grace and smoothness as to resemble the hexameters of Virgil. The Mantuan shepherds were soon after instructed by that most eminent of Latin poets to converse in refined dialogues. His *Georgics* received the highest polish of diction, and his *Epic Muse* astonished her hearers by correctness of composition, and harmony of song. Whenever **VIRGIL** indulges the genuine feelings of nature, and describes the effects of the tender passions; he is peculiarly delicate, captivating, and pathetic; but he seldom ascends to sublimity of *thought*, without having the great father of Grecian

poetry in view. CICE<sup>RO</sup>, the pride of Rome, and a model of true eloquence, adapted his style to every species of prose composition: in his letters he was easy and familiar; upon subjects of philosophy and eloquence he enriched the diction, while he enlightened the minds of his countrymen; in the character of a public speaker, he gave beauty, pathos, and energy, to his native language; he adorned it with the brightest ornaments, and infused into it the united powers of extensive learning and eminent talents. His copious and exuberant style resembles the large and flowing garments, that were thrown by the sculptor over the statues of the gods, and which, far from pressing and confining their bodies, gave free exercise to their limbs, and superior gracefulness to their motion. CORNELIUS NEPOS, the friend of Cicero, has shown his congenial taste by the easy and unaffected style, in which he has recorded the lives of eminent persons of his own country and of Greece. The Commentaries of CÆSAR are valuable no less for accuracy and liveliness of narrative, than for the purest simplicity of diction. HORACE suited the colours of his composition to the nature of his subjects: in his Epistles and Satires he is humorous without coarseness, and censorious without asperity; and in his Odes he is concise, splendid, and majestic.\* The easy and licentious OVID, the terse CATULLUS, the plaintive TIBULLUS, poured forth their poetical effusions in a full and clear stream of description. PHÆDRUS, by his neat and expressive versification of the Fables of Æsop, proved that Iambic measure was suited to the genius of the Latin tongue.

\* His poems seem to possess every merit, except decency and morality, which they sometimes want.

LIVY gave the most finished graces to historic composition; and it is difficult to determine whether he most excels in the clearness of his descriptions, or the appropriate eloquence of his speeches. Learning has sustained an irreparable injury in the loss of the concluding, and of course the most interesting part of his work, which related to a period, that admitted the most advantageous display of his talents for historical painting, his zeal for truth, and his ardour in the cause of liberty. During this splendid period, so glorious to Rome and to human nature, the affected phraseology of Sallust was an omen of the approaching decline of classical purity.

The high reputation acquired by these writers, whose praise has been the favourite theme of every polished age, results from combining in their works the genuine beauties of elegant composition.

However they may differ in the direction of their talents, the nature of their subjects, and the style of their productions, there is still a congeniality of taste conspicuous in all their writings, which are marked by such perspicuity and elegance of language, and animated by such propriety and vigour of thought, as can only be well understood and fully relished by frequent perusal and attentive observation; and the extreme difficulty of reaching the standard of excellence, which they have erected, is sufficiently manifest from the small number of modern writers, who have imitated them with any considerable degree of success.

To follow the steps of Grecian authors was the general practice of the Romans. Each of them found some predecessor, who had led the way to the fields of invention, and was therefore adopted as the instructor of his *inexperienced* genius, and his guide to eminence and

fame. The assistance which Homer, Hesiod, and the tragedians, afforded to Virgil, was similar to that which in other branches of composition Pindar, Archilochus, Alcæus, and Sappho gave to Horace; Menander to Terence; Plato and Demosthenes to Cicero; Polybius to Livy; and Thucydides to Sallust. As a copy must from its own nature be inferior to the original, which it imitates, they have all fallen short in point of originality and fervour of composition. The poets are more particularly remarkable for enriching themselves with foreign treasures; and as so many of their obligations to the Greeks, whose works are still extant, are discovered, it is perhaps the less unfair for us to conclude, that the Romans were very deeply indebted to those, whose works have not escaped the ravages of time. The lost comedies of Menander and Philemon, and the lost books of Polybius, if they could be recovered, would probably make such discoveries as considerably to abate the praise usually bestowed upon Terence and Livy. The want of originality was in some measure, although imperfectly, supplied by judgment and taste. The rules of criticism were studied when various kinds of literature were cultivated at Rome; for Horace wrote his *Art of Poetry* nearly at the same time when Virgil was composing his *Eneid*. A blind attachment to their great masters fettered the minds of the Romans, and rendered them close and servile followers, rather than daring and free adventurers. If however we consider the manners of the nation, their dignity of character, their undaunted spirit, their love of freedom, and the great improvements made upon other foreign inventions; particularly upon the arts of government and war, we may fairly pronounce, that they would have approached much nearer to perfection, and that they

would have taken a nobler and a sublimer flight, if they had trusted less to the genius of Greece, and more to the enthusiasm of nature. This argument applies with equal force to modern imitations of the ancients, which have produced the same effects by restraining genius and retarding the progress of useful learning.

## II. DECLINE OF THE LANGUAGE.

The decay of taste, which extended its influence to the productions of the fine arts, prevailed likewise in works of literature. In the writers who flourished after the Augustan age this circumstance is remarkable, although we should be deficient in justice not to acknowledge that they possess a considerable share of beautiful imagery, lively description, and just observation, both in poetry and prose. Seneca degraded the dignity of his moral treatises by sentences too pointed, and ornaments of rhetoric too numerous and studied; and Pliny gave too laboured and epigrammatic a turn to his Epistles. Lucan indulged the extravagance and wildness of his genius in puerile flights of fancy; and Tacitus fettered the powers of his judgment, and obscured the brightness of his imagination by elaborate brevity, and dark and distant allusions.\* Such affectation was in vain substituted for the charms of nature and simplicity. So fruitless is the attempt to supply, by gaudy ornaments of dress, and artificial beauty of complexion, the want of genuine charms, and the native bloom of youth.

\* The character given by Pliny to Timanthes may be justly applied to Tacitus: "In omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur; et cum ars summa sit, ingenium tamen ultra artem est." Lib. xxxv, c. 10.

QUINTILIAN, in an incomparable work, written to form the mind, and complete the education of a Roman orator, and abounding with the purest principles of judgment, and the choicest treasures of learning and experience, endeavoured to direct the attention of his countrymen to the ancient models of composition. But the weeds of a bad taste were too deeply and too widely sown to be eradicated, even by his diligent and skilful hand; and this degeneracy in the productions of literature, with a few exceptions, kept a regular pace with the depravity of manners, which prevailed during the succeeding times of the lower empire.

It may be observed of Quintilian and of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that their respective works are not merely calculated for the improvement of youth in eloquence and painting, but that they contain the principles of true taste, which are applicable to the fine arts and to literature in general, aided by great force of expression, and adorned with great elegance of fancy. The concise review of Greek and Latin authors by Quintilian, is perhaps scarcely to be paralleled for correctness of judgment. Quint. lib. x, de Copia Verborum. He enlarges with peculiar pleasure upon the Orations of Cicero, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer; and gives an admirable character of the Comedies of Menander. His strictures upon Seneca prove, that in the decline of literature, when the works of that author were most popular, the taste of Quintilian was neither vitiated by false refinement, nor perverted by the prejudices of his contemporaries.

“ Were we to divide the whole space from Augustus to Constantine into two equal periods of time, we could not observe without surprise the difference in their respective degeneracy and deterioration. The



writers in the first division rank, it is true, far below *their* predecessors of the Augustan school: but who will compare Calphurnius and Nemesianus with Lucan and Statius? Tacitus must not be degraded by a comparison with any historian of the latter interval; and Suetonius himself rises far above the level of Spartianus, Capitolinus, and Lampridius."

"St. Ambrose, St. Augustin, and Pope Leo the First, were undoubtedly men of powerful minds and extensive learning; but they exhibit strong proofs of the corruption of language. Nor can a more favourable judgment be passed upon the more lineally descended classics, the partizans of Homeric deities and pagan mythology. Servius was nothing more than a pains-taking grammarian; Macrobius, a professed scholar and critic, was unable to use his own language, or exemplify his own rules; and Symmachus, a courtier, and a man of distinguished abilities, has not the least claim to elegance of diction, or profundity of thought. Claudian himself, a foreigner, seems born to rescue the age from general contempt, and in spirit and harmony ranks high among the Roman poets. As to Ausonius, Sidonius, Apollinaris, and the galaxy of transalpine scholars, which sheds a faint gleam on the last stage of Roman literature, they obtain by their number a distinction they could not claim by their merits." Introduction to the Literary History, &c. p. 20.

The great cause of the corruption of the Latin language, which gradually took place after the reign of Augustus, proceeded from the number of strangers, Goths, Alans, Huns, and Gauls, who resorted to Rome from the provinces of Italy, and other parts of the empire, and intermixed foreign words, and new combinations of speech, with the original Latin. It is pro-

bable indeed, that as the classical language of Rome flourished for so short a period, it had never taken deep root in the provinces of Italy, where the inhabitants of Apulia, Tuscany, Umbria, Magna Græcia, Lombardy, and Liguria, were all distinguished by their peculiar dialects. The prevalence of Greek likewise had no inconsiderable influence in shortening the continuance of pure Latin, as the former had long been fashionable among the polished Romans; and when the seat of empire was removed, it entirely superseded the use of the latter in the court of Constantinople.

The accurate observer of the Latin tongue may trace its progress through the successive stages of infancy, childhood, manhood, and old age. The infancy marks the time when Saturn and Janus reigned over the most ancient inhabitants of Italy, and the Salii pronounced in honour of the gods their wild and unpolished verses. The childhood refers to the reign of the kings, and the establishment of the laws of the twelve tables. Its manhood denotes the decline of the republic, and the rise of the empire, when poetry was cultivated by Terence, Lucretius, Virgil, and Horace; eloquence by Hortensius and Cicero; and history by Cornelius Nepos and Livy. Its old age characterises the reigns of the latter emperors, when false refinement banished the taste of the Augustan age, and the language became debased and corrupted.

### III. STATE OF THE LANGUAGE IN MODERN TIMES.

The extensive conquests of the Romans, their constant intercourse with other nations, and powerful influence over them, promoted the wide diffusion of their language. The general establishment of their

laws, and the custom of pleading in the courts of justice in no other language, laid the natives of many countries under the necessity of making its study a part of their education. After the fall of the empire, the Germans, as soon as they directed their attention to literature, revived it by the study of the imperial law. Nor did the authority of the Papal See contribute less to preserve and disseminate it; for it was the refined policy of the Conclave to oppose the learning of Rome as a barrier against the encroachments of the Greek church; so that the popularity of the Latin tongue bore no inconsiderable proportion to the extent of the pontifical power. To these causes may be attributed the prevalence of Latin, as a living language, upon the continent of Europe. It is at present spoken with fluency not only in France and Italy, by those who have received a liberal education, but even by the peasants in many parts of Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

Whilst the Romans were masters of the ancient world, and ever since the revival of learning, no language has had better pretensions to the title of an universal language than the Latin. So great has been its prevalence, that it has been cultivated by every enlightened nation; and there is no branch of learning, discovery of art, or system of science, and indeed scarcely any topic of liberal discussion or inquiry, which has not been indebted to it for expression, ornament, and illustration. This has always been the vehicle of communication between men of letters, and has enabled them to carry on a correspondence with each other from the most distant places. Many celebrated authors have considered their native tongues, as either unpolished in their phraseology, or confined in *their* circulation; and therefore have had recourse to

the language of ancient Rome. The rays of science and learning, that beam from many valuable productions, have been transmitted to the world through this clear and beautiful medium. This is the language in which were composed the invaluable productions of Erasmus, Grotius, Puffendorff, Newton, Boerhaave, Bacon, and Gravina.

Even in the present age, every writer who wishes his works to descend to remote posterity, must not venture to erect the monuments of his fame with the perishable materials which modern languages supply, highly refined and firmly established as they may appear. They are in a state of constant fluctuation, and are subject to the caprices of fashion and novelty: but the Latin is fixed and permanent. The phrasology of Chaucer and Hollinshed, of Malherbe and Rabelais, has long been obsolete, and in a state of old age; whilst that of Horace and Cicero, tried by the test of centuries, and consecrated by the respect of mankind, flourishes in perpetual youth. The language once spoken by the conquerors of the world, is still used to express the dictates of gratitude, honour, and veneration. It is inscribed upon the public edifices; it distinguishes the monuments and the medals of every country in Europe; and transmits the remembrance of scholars, philosophers, patriots, and heroes, through the succeeding generations of mankind, in terms, which, with respect both to dignity and precision, no modern tongue can equal.

At the revival of learning the opinion of scholars was by no means uniform, as to the proper standard of Latin composition. Longolius, Bembo, Paulus Manutius, and other writers of considerable note, were advocates for the exclusive imitation of Cicero, and endea-

voured to gain the classic palm, by presenting in their works a servile copy of his style. The impropriety of this predilection was fully proved, and the right of the other classics to a due share of attention was ably maintained by Henry Stephens, Politian, and Erasmus. This controversy, carried on with so much warmth and ingenuity on both sides, has long ceased: the great Roman Orator has been allowed to give the law of elegant writing to succeeding times; and this prerogative is founded upon the admirable perspicuity, copiousness, and richness of his diction. Virgil reigns with unrivalled sway in the province of poetry, and his works have fixed the standard of Latin versification. Modern writers have risen to fame in exact proportion as they have employed their diligence and taste, in the imitation of these great masters; but subject, however, to that defect, which necessarily attends the study of a foreign language, the expressions generally take a tincture from their native tongue; and in the Roman disguise may frequently be discovered the features of the French, the German, and the English. Justice however restrains us from applying this observation with equal force to the Italians, as the derivation of their language, and their descent from a Roman origin, enable them to tread more exactly in the steps of their illustrious ancestors.

To acquire such classical knowledge as to be able to write Latin with ease and elegance, can only be the work of him, who is equally a sound scholar and a man of taste. He must be sensible that a good style does not consist in a close and servile imitation of any author in particular; but that it depends upon an intimate acquaintance with the purest writers, particularly *those of the Augustan age*. He must examine the

nature of their works, develope the art, and unravel the texture of their compositions. His next care must be to adapt their expressions to his own ideas, in a manner suitable to the nature of his subject, whether it be theological, scientific, historical or poetical; and, when he adorns himself with the dress of the ancients, he must endeavour to move with grace, and speak with ease and dignity. Thus, it is presumed, may be acquired, by attentive observation and repeated trials, that diction which is pure, but not affected; learned but not pedantic; and classical at the same time that it is original. These are the fair colours of style, which adorn the elegant, luminous, and flowing periods of Gravina and Lowth; and the harmonious and polished verses of Milton, Vida, and Sannazarius.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

THE assertion will not perhaps be liable to be controverted by those, who are best acquainted with such subjects, and are best qualified to make extensive and just comparisons, if it be said that the Greek claims the superiority over all other languages. In its numerous modes of expression there is precision without obscurity, and copiousness without redundancy. It owes the former to the various and diversified inflections of its words, and the latter to the great number of its derivatives. In its general structure and formation, a proper regard is paid to the ear, as well as to the understanding; for its energy and strength are not more striking than its harmony. The strictness of its rule does not impose too much restraint upon its expressions, and its grammatical system is in every part exact and complete. See Monboddó's *Origin of Language*, vol. iv, p. 25, &c.

From a short view of its *history* and *characteristics*, it will be evident, that this language deserves to be held up as a perfect model of expression, and that it fully justifies the praise of those scholars and critics, who have celebrated its excellence in proportion as they have enjoyed its beauties, and derived taste, improvement, and pleasure, from the perusal of its incomparable writers.

The East was the fruitful source of the literature, as well as of the science, and the mythology of the Greeks. Letters were communicated by Cadmus and his Phœnician followers to them; and they were more indebted to the roving disposition, or the necessities of strangers, than to their own active curiosity, for this acquisition. It is probable that, before they received this valuable species of knowledge, they represented their thoughts by delineating the figures of plants and animals, as the Egyptians did in their hieroglyphics, because the Greek word *γραφειν* signifies both *to paint* and *to write*; and *σηματα*, or *σημια*, mean as well the *images of natural objects*, as *artificial marks*, or *characters*.

The oral language of ancient Greece, before it rose from a state of barbarism, was simple and uncompound-ed. It was formed from the primitive dialects of the Hellenians and Pelasgians. So small was the original stock of Grecian eloquence, that all the words are derived from an inconsiderable number of primitives. But the acute and ingenious spirit of the people gradually displayed itself in the increase and improvement of their modes of expression, as they advanced in the cultivation of other arts, and the progressive stages of civilized life.

The names of the original characters of Phœnicia, and those of Greece are similar; and the resemblance of their forms, and the ancient mode of writing from the right hand to the left, which is common to them both, furnish a decisive proof, that they had one and the same origin. In process of time they changed their arrangement in writing, and inscribed their characters in alternate order, from the left to the right, and from right to left, as appeared by many authentic monuments of antiquity, particularly the celebrated



Sigean inscription, of which a curious representation is given in Shuckford's *Connexion of sacred and profane History*.\* Some letters were afterwards added, the powers of others were altered, written vowels were introduced to supply that deficiency which was common to Greek with all the Oriental dialects; and the combinations of vowels called diphthongs were introduced, which are in a great degree peculiar to the Greek language. The divisions into dialects were gradually formed by the independent and unconnected people, whose names they bear; and as they had no common metropolis, they adapted their modes of speech to their own provincial manners and characters. The Doric, of which the Eolic was a branch, was spoken in Bœotia, Peloponnesus, Epirus, Crete, Sicily, and all the Grecian colonies planted upon the coasts of Italy. It was characteristic of the unpolished manners of the Dorians themselves, and bore some analogy to that grandeur and simplicity of design, which are visible in the remaining specimens of their architecture. The most perfect examples of this dialect, which the ravages of time have spared, exist in the Pastorals of Theocritus, the Odes of Pindar, and the mathematical treatises of Archimedes. Although the Ionic is the prevailing dialect of Homer, he has diversified his works with the various forms of expression which the others supplied. The favourable opportunities afforded by his

\* Vol. i, p. 264, &c. Plato seems to intimate the Greek language was derived from the Hebrew, which he calls the language of the Barbarians. He divides words into two classes; the primitive, which he ascribes to God; and the derivative, which he attributes to human invention. Plato in *Cratylus*. Montfaucon *Palaographia*, p. 115, 121, 553. Vossius *de Arte Gramm.* lib. i. c. 10

travels into the different parts of Greece and its colonies, furnished him with this advantage, and gave him a complete command of every kind of provincial phraseology.\* The progressive improvements of the Ionians were communicated to their dialect, which was spoken on all the populous coasts of Asia Minor, as well as in the territories of Attica. The witty and ingenious inhabitants of that province, advanced it to that state of refinement, elegance, and sweetness, which charm the classical reader in the Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, the Comedies of Aristophanes, the Works of Xenophon, the Dialogues of Plato, the Treatise of Aristotle, and the Orations of Demosthenes.

The Athenians were celebrated for the greatest delicacy of taste. Even the inferior classes of citizens decided not only upon the sentiments delivered by the public speakers, but criticised the purity of their language, and the harmony of their periods. So exquisite was their judgment, as oftentimes to border upon fastidiousness; and the least deviation from the established rules of propriety offended their ears. As a remarkable instance of their refinement, we are told that Theophrastus, the celebrated author of the *Characters*, a native of Lesbos, and a disciple of Plato, who gave him his name for the fluency and elegance of his diction, was discovered by one of the common people of Athens to be a stranger, by his too great accuracy of pronunciation.

The theory of derivation adopted by Lord Monboddo, the author of "the Origin and Progress of Language," according to which all the words of the Greek language are derived from duads of vowels, originated

\* Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer, p. 282, &c.

with Hemsterhusius, one of the most eminent scholars of his age. Not only the vowels regularly taken from  $\alpha$  to  $\gamma$ , and terminated with  $\Omega$ , are made the basis of this plan; but the most ancient consonants are either prefixed to them, or inserted between them, so as to form about a hundred radical verbs. With these other consonants and vowels were mixed, and variously combined; and thus the whole language is supposed to have been gradually constructed and furnished with its abundant stores of derivative words.\*

We do not hesitate to acknowledge, that this theory is very ingenious, and deserves the examination of those who are fond of investigating the origin of languages. The Greek, no doubt, is distinguished by very strong marks of a methodical structure. But ought it not to be considered, whether language, like the government of nations, does not arise out of peculiar circumstances and situations? Is it not probable that necessity, the invention of arts, and the exercise of various occupations, are its genuine sources? After a people have emerged from a savage state, in which all their attention has been employed in procuring the means of subsistence, and they have made some considerable advances in refinement, they have then leisure to fix the proper standard of their language, to reduce it to order, and complete its artificial form. For its origin, therefore, it can be little indebted to the systematic precision of rules, whatever it may owe to them for its improvement. The ages of barbarism may produce warriors and legislators; but it required a less turbulent and more refined state of

\* *Origin and Progress of Language*, vol. ii, p. 540, vol. iv, p. 54. *Lennepe's Etymologicon Prolegom.* p. 27, and vol. ii.

society, for grammarians and philologists to arise, and for works of literature to be composed, and regulated by their laws.

### I. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

Among its numerous beauties, it is deservedly celebrated for sweetness, as well as variety of sounds, to which our pronunciation is far from doing justice, from a want of the same compass, and modulation of tones. By transposing, altering, and taking away letters, the Greek was softened, and made more pleasing to the ear. The diphthongs, as well as the open vowels, swell and elevate the tones, in a manner superior to modern languages. The declensions of nouns, the conjugations of verbs, the changes of dialects, and the number of poetical licenses, produce the greatest variety of terminations. Many words are closed with vowels, and very few with mute consonants, as is the case in the Oriental and other languages.

In the works of Homer in particular, the beauty of single words, considered only with respect to sound, is remarkable. With consummate skill and taste he has made choice of such as are rough or smooth, long or short, harmonious or discordant to the ear, so as to agree exactly with the nature of his different subjects. The names of persons, rivers, mountains, and countries, are sometimes soft and flowing, and sometimes grand and sonorous, and contribute in no small degree to improve the charms of his descriptions.

The works of the best Greek authors are much to be admired for the skilful arrangement of words and the beauties of finished composition. From the accu-

rate distinctions made by genders and cases in nouns, and by persons in verbs, no invariable situation of words was necessary; and consequently such as were declinable could be placed in any part of a sentence without injury to its perspicuity. In this respect modern languages are very defective; for as the nouns and verbs in general are indeclinable and must be attached to their respective articles and auxiliary verbs, an uniform and fixed position is necessary, in which no change can be made without detriment to the sense, if not total confusion of it. Greek compositions, on the contrary, abound with grand and lofty sentences, consisting of members of various extent, terminating sometimes with one part of speech, and sometimes with another. Hence the ear is constantly gratified by an endless variety of pauses, and an harmonious flow of periods; and an emphatical word, like the principal figure in a picture, is placed where it will produce the most striking effect. In poetry this arrangement is still more remarkable, as it is accommodated to every different kind of metre. All these changes were made with so much skill and effect, as to satisfy the refined judgment of Homer and Pindar, Plato and Demosthenes. Unable as the moderns are to equal these beauties, or even to form a complete idea of their nature; yet the delicacy of taste and extent of knowledge possessed by the ancient critics, who lived some ages after the most flourishing era of Grecian literature, amply qualified them for this purpose. Both Dionysius the Halicarnassian and Demetrius Phalereus enter into particular and critical discussions on the melodious construction of Greek sentences, in prose as well as verse, conduct their observations upon regular principles, and illustrate them by the examples of the most eminent authors.

Other characteristic properties of the Greek language will appear by considering the particles, which connect sentences and members of sentences with each other. They are, indeed, too often regarded by superficial readers as redundant, or unmeaning; but when closely examined, they are found to possess particular force, energy, and precision. The diminutive words give great exactness and beauty to expression, and are calculated to annex to an object some pleasing idea of tenderness or familiarity. The dual number accurately distinguishes two persons from one, as well as from an indiscriminate and vague multitude. Different inflections of the same cases of nouns are adapted to all the uses of poetry and prose. The power of the double negative is very sensibly felt; and there are instances, where prohibition or contradiction is guarded even by three negatives, which enforce the sentiment in the greatest degree. In Greek, and in Greek alone occur the grammatical solecisms of a verb singular being joined to a neutral plural, and of the union of an article, or adjective masculine with a substantive feminine. The middle voice has the peculiar power of expressing, that a person is the subject of his own actions. The tenses are more numerous and more definite than those of any other language. In Greek alone are to be found a past imperative mood, a participle present of the passive voice, and a paulo-post future tense. Conditional action is denoted by the subjunctive, and such as relates to an object of desire, by the optative mood. The variety and exactness of ideas displayed in all the modifications of the verb show a refinement of thought and a depth of metaphysical reasoning, applied to the divisions of time, which prove the peculiar acuteness and unrivalled invention of the Greeks,

The freedom of expression which the Greek Poets allowed themselves to use is a peculiarity which cannot escape our attention. They made syllables long or short, added them to the beginning, middle, or end of some words, cut them off from the beginning, middle, or end of others, and transposed letters as they pleased. Examples of all these licenses may easily be found, and particularly in Homer, who has availed himself of this privilege to the fullest extent.

The prolific power of their language was not limited by any fixed bounds, or restrained by any certain rules. Verbs were the fruitful trees, which produced innumerable branches springing from each other in the greatest abundance and variety. They are sometimes compounded with each other, and sometimes with substantives; nouns are formed from them, and even from different tenses and persons of the same verb. But the power of compounding them with prepositions was of a much more extraordinary extent. With any one of the eighteen prepositions any verb, unless its signification made it naturally repugnant to such an alliance, could be joined. There are numerous instances of such combinations, and likewise of double and even treble prepositions being united with verbs and nouns. As such compound words possess an unrivalled strength, richness, and significant brevity, they show the creative powers of a language, which contains inexhaustible resources. Their effect is more particularly felt in poetry, which they supply with one of its most striking and beautiful ornaments. To the genius of Homer they furnished appropriate expression, and enabled him to give, even to an epithet, such distinct and picturesque ideas as poets in many other languages convey with less effect in long descriptions.

To this power of compounding words so extensive and unbounded, few resemblances can be traced more apposite than the indefinite combination of letters to form words, and the multiplication of numbers in arithmetic.

From such powers of language naturally rose a proportionable copiousness. Even as early as the time of Homer it had assumed a permanent character: and his works, produced in the infancy of arts and civilization, afforded a satisfactory proof, to what various subjects it could be applied. So full and complete indeed is the nature of his style, so far is it from affording any ground for complaints of its weakness and deficiency, that all scholars unite in their admiration of its energy and copiousness. What are the thoughts of Virgil, Tasso, or any modern poet, to which the diction of Homer, and the other great Grecian poets, could not give adequate expression, and even embellish with additional and superior beauties of harmony, richness, and variety of composition?

## II. STYLE OF GREEK WRITERS.

Thus to the fertile and happy invention of writers of all descriptions did the Greek language supply an abundant store of the most significant terms; and every conception of the mind, every appearance of nature, and production of art, were conveyed by correspondent and adequate words. The historian, the orator, and the philosopher, exercised the same freedom, energy, and beauty of expression, as the poet himself. The effect of genius upon the Grecian language was like that of the sun, when it varies the glowing tints of light, and touches the clouds with the richest and most beau-



tiful diversity of colours. Herodotus, the first of Grecian historians, adorned his curious and entertaining work with the vocal flow and poetical terminations of the Ionic, and Thucydides distinguished his celebrated history of the Peloponnesian war by the elegance and vigour of the Attic dialect.

The Greek language assumed with ease the various forms in which Eloquence strove to persuade and Philosophy to instruct mankind. Aristotle was concise, and vigorous; Plato was diffuse and poetical; Xenophon was simple and elegant. The comedies of Aristophanes and Menander, however unlike in their characters and sentiments, were both improved by the pure and refined beauties of their native dialect. Theocritus gave the artless graces of Doric simplicity to his pastorals; and Sappho conveyed her tender sentiments of passion in the pleasing cadences of that kind of versification, which is emphatically distinguished by her name. The Alcaic Ode, the Elegy, and the Epigram are all marked by their own peculiar characters. The easy flow of Iambics, and the irregular combination of choral measures, adorned the dramatic productions of Æschylus, Eurypides, and Sophocles. Their language was a perfect image of the bold and versatile genius of the people who spoke it; for it embraced the wide extent of human perceptions, was moulded into every form, and produced astonishment by its force, captivated attention by its beauty, and enraptured the ear by its varied and delightful melody.\*

While the Greeks conveyed the dictates of philosophy to the understanding, held up the most pleasing

\* I consider the principal Greek writers in this place solely with a view to their various kinds of style. The other characteristics of their works will be noticed in the history of Greece.

pictures to the imagination, or by the impulse of passion melted and subdued the heart, the dress, in which they clothed their ideas, was at once rich, elegant, and graceful; and while they rose to an elevation of genius, courage, and taste, which has never been equalled, their words were the most harmonious, nervous, and expressive, that ever flowed from mortal lips.

From considering the excellence of this extraordinary language, we may indeed be disposed to excuse, or more properly speaking, to applaud, the exalted style of praise, in which its powers were celebrated, by those who were the most competent judges of its merits. The accents which flowed from the lips of the venerable Nestor were described by Homer as exceeding the sweetness of honey. It is an observation of the great Roman orator, that if Jupiter had communicated his will to mankind, he would have adopted the language of Plato. When Pericles addressed the Athenian assemblies, he did not, in the opinion of his contemporaries, merely convince his hearers by his persuasive arguments; but, to use the exalted language of his countrymen, majestic in voice and aspect, and irresistible in force, as if he commanded the elements of heaven, he overpowered the faculties of his astonished hearers with the thunder and lightning of his eloquence.\*

\* The English reader must make a due allowance for the exaggerated praise of a credulous classical pedant, who seems to believe all the idle stories which the Grecian writers relate of their countrymen. If the celebrated Romances of Mrs. Radcliffe had been written by a Republican of Athens, they would probably have held the first rank in ancient literature.

## III. DURATION AND EXTENT OF THE LANGUAGE.

In addition to the curious circumstances which distinguish the Greek language, it may be remarked, that it was spoken and written with purity and elegance for a greater portion of time, than any other ever known in the world. The long period of twenty-three centuries will scarcely measure its continuance. We have seen, that as early as the time of Homer its standard was fixed, and it continued to be cultivated till Constantinople was taken by the Turks, in the fifteenth century. A short time before that event, although it existed in a degenerate state among the common people, it was spoken with such correctness and elegance by persons of a liberal education, and particularly by the ladies of rank and high condition, as to give no very imperfect specimen of the style of Aristophanes, Euripides, and the philosophers and historians, who flourished in the purest times. Such is the very curious fact related by the learned Philadelphus, who visited the metropolis of the eastern empire twelve years only before it was taken by the Turks. The intermediate corruptions can only be marked by scholars of more than ordinary acuteness and erudition. By such alone can the different colours and shades of diction be distinguished in the works of writers, who lived at times so remote from Xenophon and Plato, as Eustathius, the commentator on Homer, Anna Comnena, the daughter of the emperor Alexias, Chalcondylas, Procopius, and other writers, included in the list of the Byzantine historians.

That sublime moralist, and profound scholar, Mr. Godwin, is equally liberal of his praise of the language, literature, and *virtues of the Romans*. See Godwin's *Inquirer*. Editor.

The difference between pure Greek and that which was spoken and written by foreigners was much more strongly marked. The writers of the New Testament fall much below the classical standard. Hebrew idioms, and words used in new senses, abound in their writings; and their style, which by modern scholars is called *Hellenistic*, to distinguish it from pure Greek, will not bear the test of rigid criticism. Yet it is far from being of an uniform character, since we find that St. Luke wrote with more purity of expression, St. John with more simplicity and plainness, and St. Paul with greater copiousness and variety, than the other sacred writers. They approached nearer to pure Greek in proportion as they possessed the advantages of education, and were improved by intercourse with the higher ranks of society.

As this continued long to be a living language, so was its circulation very extensive. Under the successors of Alexander it was carried far beyond the limits of the Greek provinces, and long before the Christian era it was spoken by Jews, Romans, and Africans. It was cultivated by the learned in Egypt and Syria, as well as in Italy, Gaul, Spain and Carthage. Josephus and Philo Judæus preferred it to their native language: and the writers of the New Testament adopted it as the best means to facilitate the propagation of Christianity. This was the language of the early Roman historians, and both Lucullus and Cicero used it to record the accounts of their public transactions. Of its general prevalence the latter speaks in explicit terms in his Oration for Archias the poet, where he informs us, that, at a period when Latin was confined to very few districts, the Greek authors were studied, and their language was spoken in most parts of the

world. With respect therefore to its wide diffusion, the ancient Greek may be compared to modern French, which at present forms so fashionable and so general a branch of education. But whatever degree of delicacy the French may possess in common with the Greek, it wants many of its most distinguishing characteristics, and in particular its grace and harmony, its precision and copiousness, its vigour and sublimity.

There were many causes for the great extent of the Greek language. Numerous colonies planted in different parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; the commerce of the Greek merchants; the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the permanent establishments, which he made, by building many large cities, contributed to this end. But the cause, which produced this diffusion more than all others, was the intrinsic excellence of the language itself. It is a remarkable fact, that at the period when the provinces of Greece were reduced to the meanest vassalage, and the character of the people was sunk to the lowest state of disgrace in the opinion of their conquerors, their language still continued to retain its high and original reputation, and was studied not only by the Romans, but by persons of respectability and distinction in all parts of the ancient world. The pure Greek, as a living language, finally sunk with the power of the eastern empire under the triumphant arms of the Turks.

#### IV. MODERN GREEK.

Every scholar must naturally be desirous to ascertain the present state of the Greek language. Its

deviation from that which was formerly spoken, both with respect to pronunciation and grammar, is very considerable. The words of the language indeed, like Italian and Latin, are in substance the same as those of ancient Greek; there is, however, an intermixture of Turkish with that which is spoken in Asia; of Arabic with that which prevails on the coasts of Africa; and of Italian with that which is used at Benevento, and other parts of Italy. The modern Greeks pay only so much attention to Grammar, as consists in forming two cases by inflexion, namely, the genitive and the accusative; and the persons and numbers of the verbs: but with respect to declensions and conjugations they observe no rules. In their conjugations they imitate the general practice of the moderns, by constantly making use of auxiliary verbs. In their pronunciation they strictly attend to accent, and hence the quantity of words is not only disregarded, but often most grossly violated; and they have entirely lost that sweet modulation and variety of sound, which graced the lips of their ancestors.\* Such is their neglect of ancient literature, that the New Testament, as well as the works of their own classics, have been translated for their use. The decline of their language has kept pace with the degeneracy of their manners: for in consequence of a neglect of composition, and inattention to the ancient models of elegance and purity, they speak a barbarous and coarse dialect. The descendants of Pericles and Demosthenes, oppressed by a despotic government,

\* Monboddo. Forster on Accent and Quantity, p. 207. For an elegant sketch of the political and literary state of Greece during her good and bad fortune, see Harris's Philol. Inquiries, c. iii.

and immersed in bigotry and superstition, are ignorant of the pure phraseology of their illustrious ancestors; and it is a remarkable fact, that of the seventy different jargons, which are now spoken in Greece, that of the Athenians is held to be the most corrupt and barbarous. (De Pauw, v. i, p. 70.) The mixture of their language with the dialect of Turkey and other nations bears a striking resemblance to the magnificent ruins of marble temples, remarkable for exquisite architecture, which are seen in the streets of Athens to support the rude cottages and mean sheds of the Grecian slaves.

From the whole of this survey of the *English*, *Latin*, and *Greek* languages, we may form a judgment of the origin, progress, characteristics, and beauties of each; and we may be enabled to determine their respective merits. When we allow to the Greek all its due praise for harmony, copiousness, and that amazing ductility, by which it could express with ease, in derivative and compound words, new indeed, but perfectly analogical, every discovery in science, or invention in the arts; when we commend the Latin for its majesty, precision, and vigour; and when we hold up the classical writers in each as the best models of learning and taste, let us not neglect to form a proper estimate of *our own* tongue. The English language, deriving its stock of words from so many different sources, and very imperfectly understood without the aid of Greek and Latin, is energetic, rich, and copious. And, perhaps, if we were confined to the knowledge of a single modern language to the exclusion of all others, no one could be found better adapted to all the purposes of social intercourse; more capable of expressing the general sentiments of the

mind, or more deserving the praise, which we have, it is presumed on a due consideration of its comparative merits, assigned to it.



## CHAPTER VI.

### ELOQUENCE.

**"NOTHING** seems to me more excellent, than to be able to engage the affections, convince the understandings, and guide the inclinations of whole assemblies, and even to direct those inclinations from their original course into a new channel, by the commanding powers of eloquence. This noble faculty has in every free state, more particularly in times of peace and tranquillity, been always held in the highest esteem, and obtained the greatest influence. And indeed what can be a juster subject of admiration, than that amidst a vast multitude one man only, or a very small number, should rise superior to all others in the exercise of that power, which nature has equally bestowed upon all the human race? Or what is so pleasing to the ear, or so gratifying to the understanding, as a judicious and solid discourse delivered in elegant and polished language? Or what is so efficacious, or so noble, as to influence the people, the judges, and the senate, by the charms of oratory? What is so great, so generous, or divine, as to rescue the virtuous from oppression, and protect the unfortunate from injustice? Can any thing be more useful than to be always furnished with the arms which eloquence supplies to assert your rights, and to repel the attacks of injury?

And not to confine our observations within the limits of the courts of justice, or the senate-house, what is there in the midst of retirement from business more agreeable and entertaining; what better proof can be given of the refinements of a liberal education, than a flow of elegant and polished conversation? It is indeed the peculiar characteristic of our nature, which distinguishes us from the brute creation, that we can express our thoughts by language, and both enjoy and communicate the pleasures of social intercourse. Who therefore does not hold such an endowment in great estimation? and who does not think it an object of honourable ambition to surpass others in the exercise of that faculty, in which rational beings show their ascendancy over inferior animals? But not to dwell upon inconsiderable points, let us proceed to the most material. What other power than that of eloquence could have proved sufficiently efficacious to induce the scattered individuals of mankind to quit a rude and savage life in order to form regular communities? and what other power could have softened their barbarity by the refinements of civilized manners, or after states were founded, what other power, I say, could have restrained them by salutary institutions, and secured their prosperity and happiness by forms of government, and establishments of law? To close this subject, which is indeed almost inexhaustible, I lay it down as an indisputable principle, that upon the prudence and talents of an accomplished speaker, not only his own personal respectability, but the welfare of numerous individuals, nay even the safety of the government depend. I therefore earnestly exhort you, my young friends, to persevere in your present course, and to cultivate with incessant diligence the study of elo-

quence, for the sake of your own reputation, the advantage of your friends, and the prosperity and glory of your country.”\*

Such is an imperfect representation of the animated and luminous encomium, which Cicero, in the beginning of his celebrated *Dialogue de Oratore*, pronounced upon his favourite art. And to teach the best use of this noble faculty of speaking, and point out the method by which it can be made to answer the most important purposes, is the great end of the art of Rhetoric. It is evident that no study more fully repays the labour bestowed upon its cultivation, if we reflect upon the rise and progress of eloquence in the early ages of the world, and the great improvements which have been made in it both in ancient and modern times. We may recollect the extraordinary degree of perfection to which it was carried by Demosthenes and Cicero; and their productions which have come down to us give the most satisfactory proofs that they were consummate masters of their art, and that they excelled in it, not less by the extent and variety of their knowledge, than the brilliancy of their genius. In our own times we see the effects produced by rude and unpolished eloquence upon the minds of the common people in the harangues of crafty demagogues, and the ser-

\* Cicero de Oratore. lib. i. sect 30. Edit. Proust. And he has comprized the advantages of eloquence in another passage too beautiful to be omitted.—“*Jam vero domina rerum eloquendi vis, quam est præclara, quamque divina! quæ primura effecit, ut ea quæ ignoramus, discere, et ea quæ scimus, alios docere possimus. Deinde hæc cohortamur, hæc persuademus, hæc consolamur affictos, hæc deducimus perterritos a timore, hæc gestientes comprimimus, hæc cupiditates, iracundiasque restinguimus: hæc nos juris, legum, urbium societate devinxit, hæc a vita immani et fera segregavit.*” De Natura Deorum, lib. 2.

mons of itinerant enthusiasts: it is evident therefore, what a powerful instrument of persuasion and utility it may be rendered, when placed in the hands of well-educated persons, who to all the natural advantages of voice, action, and abilities, which ignorant speakers may possess, unite the guidance of rules and an acquaintance with the best examples.\*

Nor will a knowledge of the principles of Rhetoric, upon which the chief beauties of composition depend for their grace and effect, be of inconsiderable use to the *hearer* or *reader*, as well as the *speaker*. It will enable them to unravel the intricacies of composition in general, whether in verse or prose, to understand the principles upon which it is founded, and to form a right judgment of its merits.

If objections be ever started against eloquence, considered as a faculty, which may be made the instrument of evil as well as of good, it is obvious that similar objections may be urged against the exercise of the faculty of reason, as it is too often employed to lead men into error. But no one would think of bringing a serious argument from this abuse of the intellectual powers against the improvement of our understandings. Reason, eloquence, and every art most essential to the comfort of life, are liable to be misapplied; and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it would argue an excess of levity to contend, that upon this account they ought to be neglected, and held in no estimation. While the orator employs his talents, and practises the rules of his profession, in the pursuit of that end for which it was originally designed,—the

\* For the principal heads of this chapter I am indebted to that rich storehouse of knowledge, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article *Oratory*.

persuading men to good and virtuous actions, and the dissuading them from every measure that is dishonourable and vicious ; nothing can be more excellent in itself, or more useful to society.

*Rhetoric is the art of speaking and writing with elegance and dignity, in order to please, instruct, and persuade.* Elegance consists in the purity and perspicuity of language. The former may be acquired by studying the most excellent authors, by conversing with the best company, and the frequent practice of composition. The latter consists in making use of the clearest and most intelligible expressions, in avoiding ambiguous words, affected brevity, perplexity of periods, and confusion of metaphors. Dignity arises from sublime thoughts, and noble and elevated tropes and figures.

It may be thought unreasonable to fetter the mind by systems, and restrain the flights of eloquence by rules. But it is evident from experience and observation, that rules may greatly assist genius, provided they point out the right road, without confining the learner to a single track, from which he is told it is unlawful to deviate. They are undoubtedly necessary before practice gives that ease, which may enable him to trust to his own well-regulated exertions, and proceed without a guide.

To enumerate the rules of Rhetoric would require too minute a detail ; and they will be best learnt from those writers, who both in ancient and modern times have obtained great reputation by their works upon the subject. Such are Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and their faithful followers, Blair, Campbell, and Fenelon. To ascertain the leading principles relating to eloquence in general, it may be sufficient to consider its productions under four distinct heads.

- I. The sources of argument.
- II. The nature of style, and the ornaments of composition.
- III. The arrangement of the different parts of a discourse.
- IV. Propriety of action and delivery.

#### I. THE SOURCES OF ARGUMENT.

I. The basis of all eloquence is *invention*. It is his prolific faculty, which enables the speaker to form and combine such ideas, as are necessary for the statement, explanation, and illustration of his subject, with a view to conciliate the minds of his hearers, and engage their judgment and passions in his favour. A liveliness of imagination, and a quickness of thought, are great assistants to invention; and they who possess these happy gifts of nature, are found to be rarely at a loss for reasons to defend their own opinions, and to disprove those of their opponents. Of this prime faculty the most eminent orators and poets were in full possession; and we find that so far from giving us any cause to complain of barrenness of invention, they fill our minds with the abundant produce of intellectual fertility. This remark, among other instances, is particularly justified by the examples of Homer, Plato, and Cicero. To collect materials for the employment of genius, must necessarily form the great business of life. Invention, strictly speaking, implies *discovery* rather than *creation*, and must be understood to signify new combinations of those images, which had been previously stored in the memory.

Accurate learning and extensive knowledge, the prospects of nature, the discoveries of art, the aids of

education, and the results of experience and observation upon mankind, are the proper funds to supply this faculty with its requisite stores. Hence are furnished the various topics, whether *external* or *internal*, which are applicable to the different kinds of causes, whether *demonstrative*, *deliberative*, or *judicial*, and which are treated of at large by the Rhetoricians, and particularly by Aristotle and Cicero. Cicero de Inventione, lib. i, p. 55, fol. edit. The judgment must ever be active in the right application of the assistance, which genius and extensive knowledge can bring to every particular subject; whatever is trifling or superfluous must be rejected; and nothing admitted into a composition that is not fully to the purpose, and calculated to answer the end originally proposed. The bright and clear stream of eloquence, assisted by every tributary rill that can increase its fulness, should flow not in a circuitous and winding course, but with a direct and rapid current.

## II. STYLE, AND THE ORNAMENTS OF COMPOSITION.

II. Without the requisites of a proper style, and the judicious introduction of the ornaments of composition, a discourse will be dry, jejune, and uninteresting. As from hence eloquence derives its chief excellence, beauty and splendour, it is of the greatest importance to the orator to be well acquainted with the constituent parts of true ornament, and the various kinds of style.

Of *style in general* it may be remarked, that every country possesses not only a peculiar language, but a peculiar mode of expression, suited to the particular temper and genius of its inhabitants. Most of the Eastern nations are remarkable for a lofty and majestic

diction, which is full and sonorous, strong and forcible, and animated by bold and expressive figures. On the contrary, the Northern languages are more simple, and generally partake of the cold influence of their climate. In the former the warmth of imagination predominates; in the latter there is more of the strictness and correctness of judgment.

But the principal distinctions of style arise from the diversity of subjects. The same mode of expression would be as inconsistent upon different occasions, as the same dress for persons of different ranks. Propriety, therefore, requires that expression should be adapted to the nature of the subject. Style is divided into three kinds, viz. the *low* or *plain* style; the *middle* or *temperate*; and the *lofty* or *sublime*.

A *plain* style is the genuine language of nature; it may be easy, inclining to the familiar, and elegant, at the same time that it is inartificial and unaffected. As it is designed to make things perfectly intelligible, and to set them in a clear light, the proper subjects of it are epistles, essays, narratives, works of science and philosophy, or any other topics that require to be treated without ornaments, or addresses to the passions. Simplicity and ease both of thought and expression are its peculiar beauties; and the choicest examples of it are to be found in the works of Xenophon and Cæsar; the Sermons of Secker, and the Tales of Swift.

The *middle* style is best adapted to those subjects which require gravity, accuracy, and force of expression. It accords with fine thoughts, as a low style is best suited to those which are common, and the sublime is best adapted to those which are great and dignified. A fine thought deserves that character from possessing dignity, beauty, delicacy, and novelty. As



the subjects that belong to the middle style are important, though not of so exalted a nature, as wholly to captivate the mind, and divert it from attending to the diction; so it admits all the ornaments and beauties of composition. This is the sphere likewise of the most highly finished and most elaborate writing. This is the soil favourable to the growth of the fairest and most beautiful flowers of eloquence. Here strong and emphatical words, flowing periods, harmonious numbers, vivid tropes, and bright and animated figures, find their proper place. The best examples of this kind are the dialogues of Plato, the speeches of Livy, and the most admired orations of Cicero.

Lofty and elevated thoughts form the proper basis of the *sublime* style. Such thoughts relate either to divine subjects, to the works of nature, or such expressions, or actions, as are esteemed the noblest and the best. The true sublime is perfectly consistent with the greatest plainness and simplicity of expression. Depending solely on its native energy for its effect upon the mind, it rather rejects than solicits the aid of ornament; for when the soul is elevated to the utmost of its powers by a noble idea, it attends not to the niceties of language; but, from its own vigour and lively conception of things, expresses them in terms the most concise and emphatical, and best adapted to their nature. Dignity and majesty are the proper qualities of this species of style, both as to the thought and expression; as may be best exemplified by numerous passages in the holy Scriptures, the *Iliad* of Homer, and the *Paradise Lost* of Milton.

Under the sublime is properly classed the *pathetic* of composition, wherein the greatest power is exerted over the passions. Here we are interested, agitated,

and carried along with the speaker or writer, wherever he chooses to conduct us; our passions are made to rise in unison with his; we love, detest, admire, resent, as he inspires us; and are prompted to feel with fervour, and to act with energy, in obedience to the particular impulse, which he gives to our minds. Quintilian with great propriety calls this power of moving the passions, the soul and spirit of his art: (Quint. lib. vi, c. 2.) as the proper use of the passions is not to blind or to counteract the exercise of reason, but to move in conformity to it, if an improper impulse be sometimes given to them, it is not the fault of the art, but of the artist. The pulpit admits this species of eloquence, as is clear from the Sermons of Massillon and Bourdaloue: but the debates in popular assemblies open the most extensive field for its display.

The diction of an orator may include all the characteristics of these three kinds of style. As he speaks sometimes to prove and to instruct, sometimes to entertain and to delight, and sometimes to rouse, to animate, and to astonish, he must be occasionally plain and easy, manly and energetic, figurative and flowery, pathetic and sublime. (Quint. lib. xii, c. 10 et 12.) All this variety, however, is rarely necessary upon the same occasion. Due regard must be paid to the nature of the subject, the dispositions of the audience, the time, the place, and all other circumstances. Cicero refers us to some orations of his own for examples in each kind. His Oration for Cæcina is written in the low style, that for the Manilian law in the middle, and that for Rabirius in the sublime. His Orations against Verres are specimens of a mixture of all the different kinds.

Figures of speech were first introduced by necessity, deriving their origin from a want of simple expressions. The most ancient and most original languages, such as the Hebrew, Arabic, American and Indian, are highly picturesque and metaphorical.\* That which was at first the result of necessity, was in time cultivated for the sake of embellishment; like garments, which were originally used to protect the person from the inclemency of the weather, and were afterwards worn also for the sake of ornament. (Cicero de Orat. lib. iii, c. 28.) The imagination and the passions have a very extensive influence over every language: their operations are expressed by words taken from sensible objects; and the names of these sensible objects were in all languages the words most easily introduced; and were by degrees extended to those thoughts, of which men had more obscure conceptions, and to which they found it more difficult to assign distinct appellations. They borrowed therefore the name of some sensible idea, where they found, or fancied they found, some affinity. Hence the origin of *tropes* and *figures*, the former of which convey two ideas to the mind, by means of one word; the latter throw the sentence into a different form from

\* "We have planted the tree of Peace, said an American orator, and we have buried the axe under its roots; we will henceforth repose under its shade; and we will join to brighten the chain which binds our nations together." If we are required to explain how men could be poets or orators before they were aided by the learning of the scholar or the critic, we may inquire in our turn, how bodies could fall by their weight, before the laws of gravitation were recorded in books. Mind as well as body has laws, which are exemplified in the practice of men, and which the critic collects only after the example has shown what they are. Ferguson on Civil Society, p. 264.

the common manner of expression. The use of tropes and figures opens the widest field for the invention of an orator, as they allow him to give that range to his imagination, which is highly gratifying to a man of genius. *Metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, simile, prosopopæia*, the *antithesis*, and the *climax*, as they display the ingenuity of a speaker, and set off his ideas to advantage; so are they capable of affording great pleasure to his hearers, whenever they rise naturally from the subject, and are introduced with judgment and effect. They fix attention, excite admiration, and inspire delight; they speak the language of the passions, and represent the different emotions of the mind, by the most lively images of fancy; and, provided they are scattered over a composition by the hand of taste, they improve every topic by heightening its beauty, and augmenting its strength.

### III. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF A DISCOURSE.

III. It is necessary that all parts of a speech be placed in their proper order, and united in such a manner, as to render the whole clear in itself, and easy to be understood. A regular arrangement of parts is of the greatest advantage to the speaker, as it assists his memory, and carries him through his discourse, without tautology or confusion. He ought never to forget that perspicuity of *order* is as necessary as perspicuity of *language*.

The parts that compose a regular speech are divided by the ingenious author of the Lectures on the *Belles Lettres* into six, viz. the *exordium*, or *introduction*; the *statement*, and the division of the subject; the

*narration*, or explication; the *reasoning*, or arguments; the *pathetic part*; and the *conclusion*. These distinctions are sufficiently clear and intelligible, to preclude the necessity of comment or explanation. Cicero divided an oration into the same number of parts, but gave them somewhat different names, viz. *exordium*, *narration*, *proposition*, *confirmation*, *confutation*, and *conclusion*; and this is the arrangement usually adopted in the systems of Rhetoric. The *proposition* of Cicero corresponds with the *statement* of Blair; and the *pathetic* in the scheme of Cicero forms a part of the *conclusion*. It is as improbable that these artificial distinctions were ever scrupulously regarded by a speaker, as that the works on Poetry by Aristotle or Horace were ever followed in the composition of an Epic Poem; and yet Commentators have not been wanting, who have endeavoured to reduce the most impassioned speeches in Virgil to the same regular divisions as the orations of Cicero.

There may be many excellent speeches, where several of these parts are wanting, where the speaker for instance, uses no *exordium*, as is the case in the first Oration against Catiline, but begins abruptly. There may be others, which he finds it unnecessary to divide into parts, as in some orations of Demosthenes, but enters at once into his subject, and is carried on by an uninterrupted flow of argument, till he reaches his conclusion. As however these have always been considered as the constituent parts of a speech, and as in every one some of them must necessarily be found, they properly obtain a place in all systems of Rhetoric.

This method is not so strictly observed, as not occasionally to admit of *digression*, *transition*, and *am-*

*plification*, which give great beauty, if judiciously managed, to Poetry and Eloquence. Of digression there are striking examples in Cicero's Oration for the poet Archias; where he leaves the main subject of the vindication of his client, to express his commendation of polite literature. The transition is absolutely necessary, where a discourse consists of many parts: but it is the rapid and abrupt transition, which is most to be admired for its effect in rousing the attention. Of this there are various instances in the Orations of Cicero.

*Amplification* does not merely signify a method of enlarging an object, but of representing it in the fullest and most comprehensive view, that it may in the most lively manner strike the mind, and influence the passions. Of this an instance is given in the noble encomium on eloquence, which forms the introduction to this chapter. There is another example in the Oration of Cicero for the Manilian Law; when, having first lamented the want of good generals at that time among the Romans, he expatiates upon the qualities requisite to constitute a complete commander; and closes his description with proving, that all these qualities were united in Pompey.

The power of eloquence appears in nothing to such extent and advantage, as in a copiousness of expression, or a proper degree of amplification, suited to the nature of the subject. A short detail or description is too often attended with obscurity, from an omission of some material circumstances. But when images of things are drawn in their just proportion, painted in their proper colours, set in a clear and full light, and represented under different points of view, with all the strength and beauty of eloquence, they

captivate the minds of the audience, and, by an irresistible force, move and bend them to the will of the speaker. And this is precisely the effect intended to be produced by the exertion of that power of eloquence called *Energicus*, or *evidentia*, so much insisted upon, and so fully described by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.\* Here the audience are made spectators of the scene which the speaker describes: here is no necessity to call in the aid of figurative language, but only to represent in strong, energetic, and vivid terms, what has passed, and what he wishes to impress upon the mind. Here every object is visible, distinct, and affecting; every being lives, moves, and acts; and every circumstance is with a happy selection of topics brought forward, that can convince the judgment, or overpower the heart. No writers excel more in this species of eloquence than Livy and Tacitus.

It is the proper end of oratory for the speaker to express himself in such a manner, as completely to accomplish his purpose, whether it be to instruct, to please, or to persuade; and he who adapts his language, and his sentiments with the greatest ability, to these ends, is best intitled to the prize of eloquence. Hence it is evident, that the essence of all that deserves the name of eloquence is far from consisting in vehement action, and wordy declamation; but depends upon good sense, and accurate knowledge, expressed in spirited language, and recommended by a pleasing and correct delivery. To be complete master of a subject is the first requisite; to be well furnished with matter and argument will give to a discourse an air

\* Quint. lib. vi, c. 2. Ciceronis Acad. iv, 17. Aristotelis Rhet. lib. iii, c. 11.

of manliness and dignity, which is a powerful instrument of persuasion.

A good writer or speaker to purity and perspicuity of expression will add *ornament*; upon which depends, if not the usefulness, at least the principal beauty of eloquence. This it is which gives to composition, magnificence, sweetness, and elegance; which engages attention, captivates the hearts, and excites the applauses of an audience; which distinguishes the orator from the philosopher and the man of business, which raises his language above the simplicity of common prose, tempers the severity of his arguments, improves the keenness of his wit, and enlivens the brisk sallies of his fancy. This it is which, properly speaking, makes rhetoric an *art*; all its other parts may be attained by the mere kindness of nature: but without discipline, without much study and experience, the perfection or ornament, such as characterizes the best speakers, can never be attained.

He who wishes to produce the desired effect in speaking, must be free from all insincerity. He only can address himself *effectually* to the heart, and the feelings of others, whose mind glows with the warmth of sensibility, and whose arguments result from conviction. He must feel the influence of those passions and emotions, which he wishes to inspire. (Quint. lib. vi, c. 2, sect. 3.) An assumed character and an affectation of feeling will not be long concealed under the disguise of dissimulation. The greatest orators were distinguished by the virtues which they laboured the most strenuously to inculcate. Demosthenes and Cicerò were eminent for a patriotic spirit; and those speeches, into which they have infused it, have always attracted most admiration from the world.



and the path of fame is still left open to rising orators. The rules laid down by the ancients, as the principles involved in those rules are of general utility, may be studied to great advantage, although much judgment is necessary for their proper application; and attention must be paid to modern taste and modern manners.

Many distinguished examples of eloquence may be held up to the observation of the young orator; but he must avoid too close an imitation, even of the most eminent. Let him study the most esteemed works of his predecessors; let him frequently revolve, and even commit to memory, their productions, and repeat them with suitable voice and action; and let him rather in his own compositions endeavour to catch a portion of their spirit, than tread servilely in their steps. Demosthenes was vehement, abrupt, energetic, and sublime. Cicero was dignified, luminous, and copious. Chatham united the energy of one to the elegance of the other. Mansfield was persuasive, delightful, and instructive. Burke was flowery, vivid, and fluent. Let the orator study to combine in his compositions their united excellence. Let him not, to use the apposite and beautiful illustration of Quintilian, resemble the stream, that is carried through a channel formed by art for its course; but rather let him imitate the bold river, which overflows a whole valley; and where it does not find, can force a passage by its own natural impetuosity and strength.

## CLASS THE THIRD.

### HISTORY.

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#### CHAPTER I.

#### THE STUDY OF HISTORY IN GENERAL.

**CURIOSITY** is one of the strongest and most active principles of human nature. Throughout the successive stages of life, it seeks with avidity for those gratifications, which are congenial with the different faculties of the mind. The child, as soon as the imagination begins to open, eagerly listens to the tales of his nurse: the youth, at a time of life, when the love of what is new and uncommon is quickened by sensibility, is enchanted by the magic of romances and novels: the man, whose mature judgment inclines him to the pursuit of truth, applies to genuine history, which even in old age continues to be a favourite object of his attention; since his desire to be acquainted with the transactions of others has nearly an equal power over his mind, with the propensity to relate what has happened to himself.

The love of fame, and a desire to communicate information, have influenced the ingenious and the ambitious, in almost every age and in every nation, to leave behind them some memorials of their existence, actions, and discoveries. Thus has the curiosity of mankind secured, by methods at first very rude and incomplete, and in succeeding times by records more improved and satisfactory, its favourite enjoyments.

The method of conveying accounts of remarkable transactions in the earliest ages of the world, by means of oral tradition, was very imperfect and uncertain. Songs were the only memorials of antiquity among the Germans; and their war-song, when rushing to battle, was always a memorial of some ancient hero. Poets who sung the praises of deceased warriors at the tables of kings, are often mentioned by Homer: the Scandinavians had their scalds, the Gauls and Germans their bards, and the savages of America preserved similar records of the past in the wild poetry of their country. To supply the great defects of such oral tradition, and to perpetuate their remembrance, founders of states, and leaders of colonies, gave their own names to cities and kingdoms. Pillars of stone were raised, devices were fixed upon shields and banners, and national festivals and customs were established to commemorate extraordinary events. From such imperfect attempts to rescue the past from the ravages of time and oblivion, the progress to written history was made soon after the invention of letters. The names of magistrates, and the recital of the most remarkable events, which happened during their transaction of public business, were accurately recorded, as we learn from the Chronicles of the kings of Israel, and the registers of the Consuls preserved upon the Capitoline marbles

at Rome. Such was the commencement of annals, and of a regular series of chronology. In succeeding times, when nations became more civilized, and the various branches of literature were cultivated, private persons employed themselves in recording the actions of their contemporaries, or their ancestors, and history by degrees assumed its proper form and character. It was at first like painting the rude outline of an unskilful designer; but after repeated essays, the great masters of the art arose, and produced the harmonious light and shade, the glowing colours, and animated groups of a perfect picture.

With a particular view to the works of eminent historians, both ancient and modern, it may be useful to consider,

I. *The Nature of History*, and the assistance which it derives from other studies.

II. *The Advantages of a knowledge of History.*

III. *The comparative merits of ancient and modern Historians.*

IV. *The Qualifications requisite to form an accomplished Historian*, in order to establish a standard, by which to measure the merits of Historians in general.

I. History, in the general sense of the word, signifies *a true relation of facts and events*; or, considered in a moral point of view, it is that lively philosophy, which, laying aside the formality of rules, supplies the place of experience, and teaches us to act with propriety and honour according to the examples of others. The province of history is so extensive, that it is connected with every branch of knowledge; and so various and abundant are its stores, that all arts, sciences, and professions are indebted to it for many of the materials and principles upon which they depend. It opens the

widest prospect to the eyes of mankind in the spacious fields of literature, and is one of the most pleasing and important objects of study, to which the mind can be directed.

To draw the line of proper distinction between authentic and fabulous history, is the first object of the discerning reader. Let him not burden his memory with events that ought perhaps to pass for fables; let him not fatigue his attention with the progress of empires, or the succession of kings, which are thrown back into the remotest ages. He will find that little dependence is to be placed upon the relations of those affairs in the Pagan world, which, preceded the invention of letters, and were built upon mere oral tradition. Let him leave the dynasties of the Egyptian kings, the expeditions of Sesostris, Bacchus and Jason, and the exploits of Hercules and Theseus, for poets to embellish, or chronologists to arrange. The fabulous accounts of these heroes of antiquity may remind him of the sandy deserts, lofty mountains, and frozen oceans, which are laid down in the maps of the ancient geographers, to conceal their ignorance of remote countries. Let him hasten to firm ground, where he may safely stand, and behold the striking events, and memorable actions, which the light of authentic records displays to his view. They alone are amply sufficient to enrich his memory, and to point out to him well-attested examples of all that is magnanimous, as well as all that is vile;—of all that debases, and all that ennobles mankind.

History, considered with respect to the nature of its subjects, may be divided into *general* and *particular*; and with respect to time, into *ancient* and *modern*. Ancient history commences with the creation, and extends to the reign of Charlemagne, in the year of our Lord

eight hundred. Modern history beginning with that period reaches down to the present times. General history relates to nations and public affairs, and may be sub-divided into *sacred*, *ecclesiastical*, and *profane*. Biography, memoirs, and letters, constitute particular history. *Statistics* refer to the present condition of nations. *Geography* and *Chronology* are important aids, and give order, regularity, and clearness to them all.

For information upon the subject of sacred history the student must resort to the holy Bible, to Josephus, and to the Annals of Archbishop Usher.

The affairs of the Christian Church, comprehending the lives, characters, and conduct of those who have maintained a pure and apostolical faith, as well as of such sectarists as have deviated from it, are comprised in *Ecclesiastical history*. It describes the nature of religious establishments, and displays the various opinions of Christians upon the most important of all subjects. Here we trace the progress of Christianity from obscurity and oppression, to pomp and dominion; and, after a long series of superstition and error, we see it resume its primitive character in the Reformation of the sixteenth century. This important subject has exercised the diligence and displayed the learning of many eminent writers of various ages: but the reader of general history may find sufficient gratification for his curiosity in the works of Eusebius and Mosheim.

From the people of the ancient world we first select the *Jews*, as the particular objects of our attention. They were favoured with the knowledge of the one true God. Their history carries us back to the most remote antiquity; and its importance is increased in

the greatest degree by its connexion with the Christian Revelation.

The next branch of general history is that of *Ancient Greece*. It presents a nation of heroes, philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and artists, who spoke the noblest language which ever graced the tongue of man, and who have been the guides and the instructors of all succeeding nations in arts, sciences, and philosophy. Greece was the source of light, that has irradiated a great portion of the globe.

The *Romans* in the order of excellence, as well as of time, followed the Grecians: their military talents were displayed in a long succession of conquests and triumphs in every part of the ancient world. The monuments of their genius, which the ravages of time have spared, render them next to the Greeks the boast of history, and the glory of mankind.

The *History of England* has the strongest claims to our attention. It abounds with such events and transactions, and displays such characters and actions, as it is our duty and our interest to study; and we are attracted to a perusal of its eventful records by the ties of patriotism, and a congeniality of manners.

From *Modern history* in general we select those parts which relate to the most important transactions and events, particularly adverting to those discoveries and institutions, which distinguish it from ancient times, and have contributed essentially to the present state of opinions and manners.

There are certain foreign nations, which, by the extent of their dominions, their civil polity, or their connexion with our own country, may excite our curiosity to learn their former state: but it will not answer any important purpose to dwell, for instance,

upon the affairs of France under the Merovingian, or Carolinian, families; or upon the state of Germany before the reign of Charles V. Let not the scholar waste too much time, which may be more profitably employed in other studies, in poring over the works of Thuanus, Mariana, and Froissart; or the numerous volumes of the Universal History.

With respect indeed to foreign nations, the objects of his most useful attention are the actual power, the nature of their present governments, the state of civilization, sciences, and arts, their natural and artificial advantages, their population, produce, commerce and relative importance in the scale of political greatness. This constitutes a branch of study which has been of late years much cultivated by the Germans, and is distinguished by the name of *Statistics*. Travelers and statesmen must not claim this study as their own exclusive province, since it will be found extremely useful to every English gentleman, and will qualify him to form a just estimate of the relative condition, power, and importance of his own country.

*Biography* is a branch of history, which in point of importance and moral utility ranks as high as any. The biographer by his accurate researches supplies the deficiencies of the historian. What the latter gives us only in outlines and sketches, the former presents in more complete and highly finished portraits. Their province does not merely extend to those who have acted upon the great theatre of the world, as sovereigns, statesmen, and warriors; but to all who have improved human life by their useful discoveries, adorned it by their works of genius, and edified mankind by their examples. With what pleasure do we select a Bacon, a Boyle, a Newton, an Addison, a Locke, a Radcliffe, a



Howard, and a Hanway, from the multitudes that surround them, and become acquainted with their particular characters and conduct! To contemplate such men, not inflamed by vain ambition, or courting empty popularity, but seeking retirement, and giving dignity to the walks of private life by the efforts of genius, and the exertions of philanthropy, is a high gratification to the mind, and inspires it with an admiration and a love of those virtues, which come within the reach of general imitation.

“To find that great lengths have actually been gone in learning and virtue, that high degrees of perfection have actually been attained by men like ourselves, intangled among the infirmities, the temptations, the opposition from wicked men, and the other various evils of life; how does this show us to ourselves as utterly inexcusable, if we do not endeavour to reach the heights we know have been gained by others of our fellow-creatures? Biography sets before us the whole character of a person, who has made himself eminent either by his virtues or his vices; shews us how he came first to take a right or a wrong turn, the prospects which invited him to aspire to higher degrees of glory, or the delusions which misled him from his virtue and his peace; the circumstances which raised him to true greatness, or the rocks on which he split, and sunk to infamy. And how can we more effectually, or in a more entertaining manner, learn the important lesson, what we ought to pursue, and what to avoid?”\*

\* Burgh's *Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 167. Warton's *Preface to the Life of Sir T. Pope*. Blair's *Lectures*, v. iii, P. 55, &c. “It is a thing to be wished, that every one would study the life of some great man distinguished by employs to which himself may be destined by Providence.” Du Fresnoy *tom. i, p. 43*.

No species of writing gives a more perfect insight into the minds of men than their *Letters*. In the letters of persons of distinction we expect the justness of observation which belongs to history, and the ease and good humour of elegant conversation. They place us in the situation of correspondents, and we seem honoured by the confidence of the great and good, the witty and the gay of various ages and countries. We observe them as they thought in their retired moments when, withdrawn from the bustle of the world, they gave free scope to their unrestrained opinions, and poured them without reserve into the bosoms of their friends. We may remark the immediate effects produced by good or bad fortune, and may catch the spirit of their virtues immediately from themselves. Here wit, humour, and genius, have indulged their natural sallies, and adorned the common occurrences of life in the most pleasing dress. Among the numerous instances, which might be selected of epistolary excellence, we distinguish the letters of Cicero, which display the sentiments of a vigorous mind, and give an insight into the eminent characters of his eventful times. Pliny, in *Epistles* remarkable for neatness and precision of thought, expresses the dictates of a cultivated and generous mind. If we turn our attention to the epistolary literature of our own country, we shall find that the piety and the affection of Lady Russel, the quaintness and pleasantry of Howel, the manliness and political sagacity of Strafford, the philosophical exactness and cool judgment of Locke, the simplicity of Rundle, the moralising vein of Johnson, and the taste and elegance of Gray, mark their respective letters with the strongest characters of originality, and give us the most pleasing pictures of their minds.

We naturally wish to know all we can of such persons and feel an increasing interest in their other productions; for we prize those writers the most, who combine the charms of entertainment and pleasure with the lessons of instruction. History derives considerable aid from collateral studies, which contribute to render its prospects accurate, distinct, and extensive. The sciences of *Geography* and *Chronology* are absolutely necessary to give it precision and perspicuity.

Geography gives us a description of the terraqueous globe. The land is divided into Continents, Islands, Peninsulas, Isthmuses, Capes or Promontories. The water is distinguished by Oceans, Seas, Gulfs, Lakes and Rivers. It teaches us likewise the actual division of the globe. The two points on which the earth is supposed to perform her daily motion are the *Poles*: equally distant from them both is the *Equator*, which divides the globe into two equal parts and on which are measured the degrees of *longitude*. The *Ecliptic* is the circle drawn across the equator which describes the annual course of the sun. The lines which intersect the equator at right angles, and meet in the poles, are called *Meridians*, and on them is measured the *latitude* of places. These are the great Circles of the globe, which like all other circles contain 360 degrees, and each degree 60 minutes. A degree on a great circle of the earth is somewhat more than 68 English miles. The Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn are two imaginary circles each distant at the distance of  $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees from the equator, the former to the north, the latter to the south. When the sun approaches one of these boundaries of the ecliptic he seems to make a stand for a few days, then gradually recedes toward the other: hence the

are called the Summer and the Winter Solstices. The Polar or Arctic and Antarctic Circles are drawn at the distance of  $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees from either Pole. Within these Circles the Sun appears above the horizon, from the space of six months to that of twenty-four hours.

In the survey of the four quarters of the World, viz. Europe, Asia, Africa and America, we remark the comparative dimensions and the boundaries of each kingdom and state, the governments, forms of religion, soils, productions, manners and customs by which the families of the earth are distinguished.

EUROPE although the smallest of these divisions, in extent of country, is by far the most eminent with respect to religion, laws, learning, arts, arms, and commerce.

ASIA is remarkable for the number of inhabitants, fertility of soil, and variety of climate. There are found the diamonds of Golconda, and the spices of Malabar. There the most ancient Empires were founded, the Will of God was revealed to Man, and Mahomet spread his Imposture. China is remarkable for its patriarchal state of society, its language consisting of hieroglyphical characters, and abounding in monosyllables, its wide extent of empire, and the myriads of its ingenious and crafty inhabitants. Hindoostan, or the Empire of the Great Mogul, is best known to us by the flourishing British Colonies planted upon the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts, and exhibiting the curious prospect of extensive, populous, and rich Provinces, situated at the distance of nearly half the globe from the mother country, and governed by a small Company of Merchants in London.

The vast Peninsula of AFRICA united to the Continent of Asia by the isthmus of Suez, rich in gold,

ivory, guma, and drugs, is, for the most part, barbarous and uncultivated. Yet on surveying these sultry and inhospitable regions, the mind feels some satisfaction to remark the British Settlements of Sierra Leone, and Bulama, established for raising the productions of the West Indies, without the aid of miserable slaves, and a commerce in human flesh. Egypt, whence of old beamed the light of Science and Civilization, is renowned for its stupendous pyramids, the most ancient monuments of human labour extant, the periodical inundations of the Nile, and the degraded condition of the natives foretold in the holy Scriptures, exactly corresponding with the observations of travellers. In the interior Provinces of Zamfara, and Makako, and upon the remote bank of the Niger, the people are immersed in the grossest ignorance and idolatry. At the extreme point of the Continent—the Cape of Good Hope, the tribes of the Caffres with an invincible ferocity, like the lions of their forests, oppose the restraints of civilization, and resolutely persist in their savage mode of life.

AMERICA, or the New World, was discovered by the great Christopher Columbus, in 1491, but derives its name from Americus Vesputius, who ascertained the land to the south of the equator a few years after. Its north east division, bounded by the great River Mississippi, includes the coasts peopled by the Colonists from Great Britain. The southwest part includes the fertile provinces of Mexico and Louisiana, the former belongs to Spain, the latter is ceded by that power to the French, who originally planted a colony there, and have lately sold it to the United States of America. In South America, Peru, Chili and Paraguay are likewise subject to that Kingdom. The Brasils, rich in

ebony, emeralds, and birds of the most beautiful plumage, belong to the Portuguese; and Surinam, planted with the sugar cane, cotton, and indigo, which form the most delightful prospects upon the banks of creeks and rivulets, belong to the Dutch. The Patagonians, famed for gigantic stature and mildness of temper, inhabit the most southern extremity, near the straits of Magellan.

In America the works of Creation are formed upon the largest scale. There the Rivers of St. Laurence, Amazon, Oroonoko, and Plata

..... to whose dread expanse,  
Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course  
Our floods are rills ———

roll their mighty waters to the Ocean; and there the towering Andes, extending 5000 miles in North and South America, rear their summits, white with perpetual snow even in the torrid zone.

Such is a superficial view of the Globe we inhabit, so large in size, that even Teneriffe or Mont Blanc are, compared to it, but as grains of dust upon an artificial sphere. Its diameter is 7970 miles, and its surface contains 199,557,259 square miles. Placed between the Orbits of Venus and Mars, it performs its course around the Sun at the rate of 68243 miles in an hour, and completes its annual revolution in rather more than 365 days.

From the sandy deserts of Arabia and Egypt, or the ever flourishing savannahs at the Equator, where grow the most luxurious fruits, and the waters and the fields teem with life;—from such glowing climes

to the frozen regions of the arctic circle, where vegetation is extinct, and the waters are bound by eternal frost, men as well as the inferior animals, are powerfully affected by peculiarity of situation. So great is the influence of *Climate*; but if we consider how slow and gradual the variations are from the black complexion of the Negro of Senegal, to the brown of the Otaheitan, and from him to the fair natives of the North of Europe, we shall find reasons to confirm the account recorded in the History of Moses, that the various tribes of men sprung originally from one family, as well as conversed originally in one language.

Without a knowledge of Geography no reader can have a clear idea of the scene where any occurrence takes place; but is liable to great mistakes by confounding one part of the world with another. It is applicable to history in general, and introduces the pleasing combination of the ancient and modern names of places, and a comparison of the characters and manners of those who have inhabited them at different times. It assists the memory by the various associations of ideas, with which it furnishes the mind; and the prospect of a country presented by a map, or a globe, recalls the memorable transactions which have been performed in it, and revives the recollection of its illustrious men.

Persons in various situations of life are interested in the study of geography, and may reap advantage from its cultivation. While it constitutes a branch of knowledge essentially necessary for the traveller, the merchant, and the sailor, it furnishes abundant stores of investigation to the naturalist and the philosopher. It is not only requisite for every reader of history, but

for every one who peruses the daily accounts of the events which are taking place in various parts of the world. It has long been considered as a material part of polite education; at present indeed it is more particularly proper that it should be so, as the British commerce and colonies extend our connexions to so many different countries; and as many voyages of discovery have of late years been made. These circumstances must naturally excite our curiosity, and operate as a strong inducement to the cultivation of this very interesting branch of study.

Without Chronology, which *regulates the several periods of time, and teaches its artificial divisions*, we have no standard by which the rise and fall of empires, the length of lives, the dates of remarkable occurrences, or the lapse of time can be measured. We are unable without this assistance, to understand the modes of reckoning among different nations, such as the *Olympiads* of the Greeks, the *Foundation of Rome*, the *Hegira* of the Turks, and the *Julian* and *Gregorian* Calendars. The first year of the first Olympiad coincides with the 776 year before Christ, and the year of the foundation of Rome with 753 before Christ. The *Hegira*, or flight of Mahomet from Mecca, happened in the 622 year of the Christian Era. The Julian, or old style, is so called from Julius Cæsar, who regulated the Roman Calendar. He added a day immediately after the twenty-fourth of February, called by the Romans the sixth of the calends of March; as it was thus reckoned *twice*, the year in which it was introduced was called *Bissextile*, or Leap Year. Pope Gregory the xiiiith, in 1582, reformed the Julian Calendar, as he found that the odd eleven minutes, viz. the difference between 365 days 5 hours 49 minutes, the time



in which the Sun returns annually to the same point of the Zodiac, and the 365 days 6 hours which make a Julian Year, amount in the course of a century almost to a whole day; and from this excess in reckoning the equinoxes had gone back ten days in 1257 years. He therefore caused these ten days to be suppressed, and the eleventh of March to be called the twenty-first. Thus the Equinox fell on the same day of the month as when the Council of Nice was held, in the year 325, at the vernal Equinox. The Old Style was used till September 1752, when the New was adopted in all the Christian countries of Europe.

Geography and Chronology are with the greatest propriety called the *eyes* of history: because this metaphor expresses better than any other how effectually they assist us as the proper instruments to discern the various actions and revolutions of mankind.

There are other assistances, by which the study of history may be considerably promoted, and the events which it records may be very pleasingly illustrated. Coins and medals, inscriptions,\* gems, and statues, not only show us the progress of ancient arts, but likewise ascertain many curious particulars respecting characters, instruments, buildings, and ceremonies. Coins and medals indeed are particularly serviceable in that respect. The representation of so many events is delineated upon them, that they illustrate several passages in ancient writers, and confirm doubtful facts. Sometimes they are not only the assistants but the substitutes of history. Gibbon remarks that if all the histo-

\* The comparative use of Medals and Inscriptions by the learned Scipio Maffei may be found in Du Fresnoy's new Method of studying History, vol. i, p. 323.

rians of that period were lost, medals, inscriptions, and other monuments, would be sufficient to record the travels of the emperor Hadrian. Coins are to general history, what miniatures are to historical pictures; when arranged in exact order, they answer the purpose of a chronological epitome, and convey similar information, with the additional advantage of a more lively and picturesque manner of communicating it.

But the *Laws* of a country are more intimately connected with its history, and indeed, more accurately speaking, constitute an essential part of it. They show the genius of a people, illustrate their manners, and enable us to trace their progress from rude independence to due subordination and proper government. The historians of antiquity, indeed, taking it for granted that the laws of their respective countries would be as well known to others as to themselves, have not paid sufficient attention to this subject. From the turbulent scenes of public affairs, from battles and the conflicts of contending factions, we can derive little knowledge of the internal state of manners and customs. An acquaintance with jurisprudence is calculated to supply this information; and even from the ancient laws, extremely concise as they are, we may infer with a great degree of probability, what the state of the country was, in any particular respect, when a new law was enacted. The remedy recommended clearly points out the nature of the disease. For instance, the encroachments of luxury in Rome may be marked by the Oppian law, which prohibited the Roman ladies from wearing ornaments to their dress, which exceeded the value of an ounce of gold; and by a decree of the Senate obtained by Cornelius, which limited to a particular sum the expense of funerals.

## I. THE ADVANTAGES OF A KNOWLEDGE OF HIST

II. If we consider the knowledge of history regard to its application, we shall find that it is nently useful to us in three respects, viz. as it ap in a *moral*, a *political*, and a *religious* point of view

In a moral point of view, it is beneficial to mar at large, as the guide of their conduct. In a politia as it suggests useful expedients to those who exe the public offices of the state, whether they are k ministers, or magistrates; or as it enables us to forr comparison with those who have gone before the just estimate of their merits. In a religious, teaches us to regard the Supreme Being as the g nor of the universe, and the sovereign disposer events.

The faculties of the soul are improved by exer and nothing is more proper to enlarge, to quicken to refine them, than a survey of the conduct of kind. History supplies us with a detail of facts submits them to our examination before we are c into active life. By observation and reflection others we begin an early acquaintance with huma ture, extend our views of the moral world, and enabled to acquire such a habit of discernment, correctness of judgment, as others obtain only by e rience. We thus by anticipation are conversant the busy scenes of the world; by revolving the liv sages and heroes, we exercise our virtues in a re and prepare them for approaching action. We the motives, the opinions, and the passions of the who have lived before us; and the fruit of that stu a more perfect knowledge of ourselves, and a c tion of our failings by their examples. At the

time we form those general principles of conduct, which must necessarily be true and commendable, because they are founded upon the immutable decrees of right reason, and are sanctioned by the uniform authority and practice of the wise and good of all ages.

Our own experience is imperfect, but the examples of ancient times are complete. Actual observation gives only a partial knowledge of mankind; great events and important transactions open very slowly upon us; and the shortness of human life enables us only to see detached parts of them. We are not placed at a proper distance to judge rightly of their real nature and magnitude. Heated by our passions, hurried on by precipitation, and misled by interest and prejudice, we view the affairs of the present times through an obscure and a partial medium, and frequently form very wrong opinions of them. On the contrary, the examples of history are distinct and clear, they are presented to us at full length, and we can contemplate them in their origin, progress, and termination. We consider them at our leisure, and decide upon the actions of those, who are removed by time to a great distance from us, with a cool and dispassionate judgment.

Experience and the knowledge of history reflect mutual light, and afford mutual assistance. Without the former no one can act with address and dexterity. Without the latter no one can add to the natural resources of his own mind a knowledge of those precepts and examples, which have tended to form the character and promote the glory of eminent men. Scipio Africanus employed many of his leisure hours in a diligent perusal of the works of Xenophon; and the Commentaries of Cæsar improved the military talents of the illustrious Eugene,

History contributes to divest us of many unreasonable prejudices, by enlarging our acquaintance with the world. It sets us at liberty from that blind partiality to our native country, which is the sure mark of a contracted mind, when due merit is not allowed to any other. It may be serviceable either as the assistant of Foreign Travel, or as its substitute, by removing an aversion to nations and institutions different from our own. It rectifies our opinions with respect to ancient and modern times, and thus enables us to form a just estimate of mankind in all countries as well as in all ages.

This study likewise tends to strengthen our abhorrence of vice; and creates a relish for true greatness and solid glory. We see the hero and the philosopher represented in their proper colours; and as magnanimity, honour, integrity, and generosity, when displayed in illustrious instances, naturally make a favourable impression on our minds, our attachment to them is gradually formed. The fire of enthusiasm and of virtuous emulation is lighted, and we long to practise what we have been instructed to approve.

History likewise is the foundation, upon which is built the true science of government. It is the proper school for princes, politicians, and legislators. They need not have recourse for instruction to the Republic of Plato, the Utopia of More, or the Oceana of Harrington. In their deliberations upon state affairs they can form no safer plans for the guidance of their conduct, than from the contemplation of facts. In the records of various states they may observe by what means national happiness has been successfully pursued, and public liberty has been firmly established: *in what manner laws have answered the ends of their*

institution in the reformation of manners, and the promotion of the general good; and thence they may draw such conclusions as may be most advantageous in the regulation of the affairs of their own country.\*

In the volumes of history likewise we see the most deceitful and crafty men stripped of the disguise of artifice and dissimulation, their designs developed, and their stratagems exposed. By the fall of the great and powerful into a state of disgrace and indigence, as well as by the revolutions of empires, we are not so liable to be astonished at the events which pass before our own eyes. The reverses of fortune so frequently recorded in the pages of former times convince us of the mutability of worldly affairs, and the precariousness of all human grandeur.

The portraits, busts, and statues of the hero, the legislator, the patriot, and the philosopher, form a most edifying school for the ingenious mind. The Roman youth, accustomed to view the images of their illustrious ancestors decorated with the emblems of the highest offices of the state, and crowned with the wreaths of victory, were fired with the love of glory, and strove to emulate their exploits.† History in a similar manner, by transmitting the spirit of excel-

\* Hoc illud est præcipue in cognitione rerum salubre et frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in illustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuæque reipublicæ quod imitere, capias; inde fœdum inceptu, fœdum exitu quod vites. LIV.

† Sæpe audiui Q. Maximum et P. Scipionem civitatis nostræ præclaros viros solitos ita dicere, cum majorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissimè sibi animum ad virtutem accendi; scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere; sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flammam egregiis viris in pectore crescere, neque prius sedari, quam virtus eorum famam atque gloriam adæquaverit. Sallust. Bell. Jugurth.

lence from one mind to another, excites a desire for whatever is fair and good, and engages even the passions on the side of the judgment. It fixes the strongest and most lasting impressions upon the mind, sanctions the arguments of reason, and gives life to the lessons of morality.

How tame and spiritless are the precepts of wisdom, even when taught by a Socrates or a Plato, if compared with the more animated beauties of virtue, exemplified in the actions of an Aristides, or a Phocion! To the former we only give the cold assent of the judgment; of the latter we express our admiration with rapture; they call forth our encomiums, they excite the spirit of emulation, and we are eager to show by our conduct the great influence which they have gained over our hearts.

But what is this homage, which is paid almost involuntarily to such great and illustrious examples? It is undoubtedly the voice of nature, and the suggestion of reason pure and uncorrupted by the bad practices of the world. It is the decision of a correct judgment, and the proof of a genuine taste for true greatness and solid glory. In order therefore to form a virtuous character, and to be distinguished for the most laudable actions, it is an object of the first concern to be ever attentive to this voice, and to conform to its wise and friendly admonitions.

While history holds up to the view instances of eminent virtues and splendid actions, she calls not the student to a *servile* imitation of her examples; for thus might he unintentionally be led to error and misconduct. No two men were ever precisely the same in moral and intellectual qualities, or in situations exactly *similar*; and therefore no one can with safety conclude,

that the same conduct could in all respects be prudent or him, which his predecessor has followed. Experiments springing from our own minds are formed with more clearness, and executed with more spirit, than those which are derived from the imitation of others. While the imitator is revolving the precedents of past times, and minutely examining them with reference to his own case, he may suffer the favourable opportunity or action to escape him, and may be undone forever; or, supposing he takes any particular example for his guide, from a want of accurate discrimination, he may be betrayed into some fatal error. The acute and the discerning will not fail to combine originality of plan with the guidance of precedent; they will make every proper allowance for the various dispositions and manners of the times; they will instantly perceive where circumstances *differ* or *agree*; and will adopt only so much of the example, as is exactly proportioned to the exigency of their own affairs.

History rises to the highest degree of importance, and attains the full dignity of its character, by fixing our attention upon the conduct of divine Providence in the moral government of the world. It is clear to every one, who takes the most superficial view of the past, that great events have often been effected by surprising means; that the consequences of actions have been much more extensive, more fatal or calamitous than were originally designed by the agents themselves; that the designs of Providence have been wrought about by the caprice of human tempers, or the violence of human passions; and that force, craft, and cruelty have always met with their just, though sometimes delayed punishment. The result of actions has been widely different from the end proposed by



those who planned them; and great revolutions have been effected contrary to the intention of the persons, who were the chief instruments of them. Such extraordinary discoveries draw us much nearer, and give us a much better insight into the operations of the Deity, than those occurrences, in which the causes are more equal to the effects; as is the case with the common affairs of life. Thus history becomes the handmaid of religion, and opens to us the most wonderful prospects of the divine interposition in the government of the world.\*

Exclusive of the general uses of history, there is a particular application of it, which every one naturally makes to his own pursuits, his own age, and his own habits of thinking. The politician searches the records

\* I subjoin the following remarkable instance from Robertson's Charles Vth, Book 10, C. 5. "It is a singular circumstance, that the Reformation should be indebted for its full establishment in Germany, to the same hand which had formerly brought it to the brink of destruction, and that both events should be accomplished by the same arts of dissimulation. The ends, however, which Maurice, the Elector of Saxony, had in view at these different junctures, seem to have been more attended to, than the means by which he attained them. It is no less worthy of observation, that the French king, a monarch zealous for the Catholic Faith, should, at the very same time when he was persecuting his own protestant subjects with all the fierceness of bigotry, employ his power in order to maintain and protect the Reformation in the Empire, and that the league for this purpose, which proved so fatal to the Romish Church, should be negotiated and signed by a Roman Catholic Bishop. *So wonderfully does the wisdom of God superintend and regulate the caprice of human passions, and render them subservient towards the accomplishment of his own purposes.*" In the preface of Sir W. Raleigh's History of the World many similar examples are taken from the early part of the History of England.

of past ages for the rise and fall of states, the measure which advanced their greatness, and the causes which precipitated them into ruin. The soldier looks for military achievements, the conduct of generals, and the discipline of armies. Cause and effect engage the attention of the philosopher; and the man of science is interested by the description of the phenomena of nature. The antiquarian studies the ancient laws, customs, and dresses, and other peculiarities of nations. The man who is advanced in years is gratified with remarking in the same book those sentiments and actions, which he disregarded in his youth; and the habits of thinking, which he has formed at one particular period of life, induce him to search for different sources of entertainment and instruction at another. Thus every person is influenced by his peculiar taste: when he consults the volumes of history, he discovers something in them to suit the complexion of his own mind; and, from a natural partiality to his own pursuits, may be inclined to think, that the historian wrote only for his use and entertainment.

Readers, however, of every age and description, may find in history ample materials for improving their judgment, by tracing the due connexion which subsists between causes and effects. They ought not to be satisfied with the recital of events alone, but endeavour to investigate the circumstances which combined either to produce, to hasten, or to retard them; as well as the manner of their operation, and the degree of their influence.

Historians, indeed, sometimes expose themselves to censure from too great a refinement of conjecture. They assign so many motives for the conduct of their heroes, that it is highly improbable all of them should

effect, they contradict our notions of probability, and only serve, by the interposition of the supposed speaker, to display the eloquence of the author. The speeches of Cæsar in his Commentaries, and those which Dion Cassius composed for him, are very different in circumstances and arguments. Of all that the ancients have left us, none approach so nearly to nature and probability as those of the Old Testament and Herodotus. The moderns have a wider range of political views; and, from their more extensive knowledge of various countries, they are better acquainted with the nature of government, and the comparative state of man.

Ever since the establishment of the regular and general conveyance of letters by posts, channels of easy and expeditious information have been opened; and the intercourse between one country and another has been more frequent, in consequence of travelling being rendered safe, commodious, and expeditious. The wide diffusion of literature likewise, extending more and more since the revival of learning, has multiplied authentic documents; valuable papers are often deposited in public libraries, where they are accessible to the curious and inquisitive; or, if preserved by individuals, they are soon discovered by the active spirit of inquiry, and communicated to the world.

An abundance of materials for history, however, is not the only requisite to inform the mind, or secure the approbation of the reader. One great fault of the modern historians is prolixity. The volumes of Thuanus, Rapin, and Carte, are calculated to fatigue the most vigilant eye, and oppress the powers of the most retentive memory. Such writers exhaust attention by magnifying trifles into importance, and diffuse

a coldness over their works by a minute detail of uninteresting affairs, or unimportant remarks. Hence the reader, unless he wishes to consult the author upon some particular subject, turns over many a page with indifference, and finally quits the historian with disgust.

The contrast with the ancients in this respect is remarkably striking. The ancients draw characters, and describe events, with a few masterly strokes, and paint in such glowing colours of language, that they seize the attention at once, and captivate the mind. Their conciseness gives them great advantage, and tends to preserve the interest excited by their descriptions. All is animated and forcible; the representations are taken immediately from recent fact; the portraits of human nature are drawn from the life; and the busy scene of action, the tumults of war, and the reverses of fortune, are placed immediately before our eyes. They write as if they came immediately from the field of battle, or the deliberations of the council. The situation of many of the ancients was particularly favourable to this lively species of composition; for Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, Sallust, and Tacitus, were actors in many of the important scenes they pourtray, and write under the influence of the deepest impressions of reality and experience.

If however we read with a view to our immediate improvement, the modern historian claims our more particular regard. He describes actions and events, which have a necessary connexion with the times in which we live, and which have an immediate influence upon the government and constitution of our country. The ancients may astonish us by relating those sudden

revolutions, which transferred empires by a single battle: but the moderns show us more of the power and progress of the mind, display more fully the causes and consequences of great events, and edify us by examples more congenial with our peculiar habits and manners; and which come more within the reach of our imitation.

### I. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ACCOMPLISHED HISTORIAN.

In order to erect a standard by which to measure the merits of historians, let us form to our minds one of the greatest characters which can adorn the literature of a country, and endeavour to point out the qualifications, by which an accomplished historian ought to be distinguished.

Such a writer chooses a subject adapted to his talents and situation. He is most fortunate, when his stores of knowledge are supplied by experience, and his own observation; as was the case with some of the best historians of antiquity, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, and Tacitus; and in modern times Sully and Clarendon. Or if he has not been himself an agent in the transactions he records, he has recourse to the purest sources of information. Although it is impossible always to select such a subject as admits of strict unity of design; yet he is convinced that the argument is most noble and most interesting, when he can preserve, without distracting the attention of the reader, by desultory digressions, a close connexion of all the parts, and in the detail of which he can proceed by a regular gradation of events to some im-

portant and sublime conclusion. This historical unity of subject may be illustrated by the Retreat of the ten thousand by Xenophon, and the Roman history of Livy. The action is not from the beginning interrupted by extraneous subjects, but ascends from one incident to another, till the principal point is reached. Impressed with a deep sense of his duty, he pays the most sacred regard to truth; and his diligence in ascertaining facts is equal to his accuracy in stating them. As far as the infirmities of human nature will allow, he is divested of the stubbornness of prejudice, the violence of passion, and the predilection of party. He is convinced that the ornaments and graces of composition may properly be employed to embellish truth, but that no embellishments can compensate for wilful misrepresentation. He guards against the flights and the delusions of imagination, and is therefore careful not to convert history into romance, or merely adorn his subject with the arguments of philosophical dissertation, or the pomp of figurative style. He carefully distinguishes where he ought to be concise or diffuse, what topics require to be stated in plain language, and what are capable of the ornaments of diction. His fondness for his work infuses vigour into his conceptions, and the delicacy of his taste gives elegance to his style, and purity to his sentiments. He is not satisfied with taking a superficial view of affairs, but with deep and acute penetration investigates their proximate and remote causes, separates them from the disguises under which they are concealed, and descends to the true motives of conduct. He breaks through the obstacles that stop the progress of vulgar intellect; and produces those thoughts and reflections, in which truth, penetration, and novelty are blended with peculiar skill, and strike

with certain effect. He distinguishes from the surrounding crowds the examples of eminent talents and virtues, and presents their pictures either completely finished, or marked by a few bold and expressive outlines. He selects such circumstances of their domestic, as well as public conduct, as will give the clearest insight into their tempers and manners. In his development of characters he regards the MORAL tendency of history, which is its noblest and most valuable end. He neither blackens his characters with the aspersions of malevolence, chastises them with unjust satire, nor heightens their lustre with the varnish of adulation. If he feels any bias upon his mind, it is that of a true philanthropist; he is inclined to draw a veil over the failings of human nature, and not expose every vice and folly to the public. He divests himself as much as possible of local prejudices, considers himself as a citizen of the world, and weighs all characters of his own or foreign countries in the balance of impartial justice. As it is his grand object to teach by example, he either makes his remarks with brevity, or leaves his reader to form his own judgment from the clear and accurate statement of facts, which he presents to his mind.

Useless, however, will prove his labour, and ineffectual his skill, in tracing events and actions back to their causes, or in preserving due order and connexion in his work, unless he can inspire his writings with animation, and excite the interest of his readers. For this most important purpose he displays the soundness of his judgment, the boldness of his genius, and the correctness of his taste. He is cautious in his choice of such circumstances as will please and strike the mind; *and, like a skilful poet or painter, he studies the effect*

of selection, combination, and contrast. He perceives that by this road the ancient historians were led to fame: he imitates their powers of lively description, and, as often as a proper opportunity will admit, paints the scene of action with a rapid pencil dipped in the most glowing colours, delineates the lively portraits of the actors, and charms the imagination, and excites the sympathy of every judicious reader. In short, the accomplished historian is awake to the interests of virtue, and is influenced by sensibility, and warmed by a proper regard for liberty, and the happiness of mankind. These principles give energy to his conceptions, and perseverance to his industry. He is best qualified to write with true dignity, when he has worked up his mind to a just elevation of thought, by reflecting, that it is his glorious and honourable province to address himself to all polished nations through the succeeding ages of the world. And he will be kept steady to the cause of justice, when he considers himself as an impartial witness, who is bound by his duty to stand before the tribunal of posterity, and is there liable to be arraigned for every offence against the majesty of truth.

By these laws, which may be considered as some of the principal rules of history, every historian may be tried. They furnish an equal standard to direct the writer, and determine the judgment of the reader.

It is the duty of fair criticism to estimate the merits of writers at their just value. If therefore we seek for those historians who approach nearest to this standard, by excelling in that particular department which each has undertaken, we ought to select from the Greek writers, THUCYDIDES and POLYBIUS; from the Latin, LIVY and TACITUS; and from those of Great



Britain, CLARENDON, ROBERTSON, and HENRY. Their celebrated productions are marked by strong and lively description, energy of thought, love of virtue, and zeal for truth; and their refined talents for political speculation were exercised with a view to the welfare of their own countries, and the general improvement of mankind.

### CHAPTER III.

## THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

THE Israelites, or ancient Jews, were those distinguished people, who were favoured by the immediate care of the Almighty, and conducted by his especial guidance to Judea, a place of residence promised to their remote ancestors. In consequence of their obstinacy, idolatry, and wickedness, and more particularly for the rejection of their Messiah, they were subdued by the Romans, after sustaining a siege in their metropolis, unparalleled in the annals of history for its distresses, calamities, and slaughter. Jerusalem was reduced to ruins, the Jewish government was totally subverted, and the surviving people were dispersed over most parts of the world. Their descendants still remain unmixed with the rest of mankind, and are marked by their original features of national peculiarity: they adhere with the most zealous attachment to the religion of their forefathers, and cherish the hopes of restoration to their former prosperity by means of a glorious and triumphant Deliverer.

They preserve with the most watchful care the sacred books of their ancient writers. And astonishing, *very astonishing it is to observe, that in the prophetical parts of these sacred Books are contained all the events before mentioned of their extraordinary history.*

Their particular conduct, and the vicissitudes of their national affairs, were predicted by their prophets, and more especially by Moses, their great lawgiver, in the infancy of the world, at the vast distance of thirty-three centuries from the present times. The accomplishment of these predictions bears the fullest and most striking evidence to the truth and inspiration of their Prophets, and illustrates the dispensations of Providence to his chosen people.

These sacred Books contain likewise predictions the most exact of the character, office, and actions of the Messiah of the Jews, the great lawgiver of the Christians, the appointed Saviour of the world.

Such interesting circumstances as these, in addition to the peculiar nature of the Jewish polity, considered as a divine institution, the curious manners and customs, and the memorable actions of the descendants of Abraham, viz. of the most ancient people of whom we have any authentic accounts, combine to place these Books first in order of importance, as in order of time.

If we consider, I. The great *antiquity* of these Books; II. The *proofs* which support their authenticity; III. *Their subjects, the characters of the writers*, and the place they occupy in the order of general history, particularly as they stand connected with the Christian Revelation, they will be found to deserve our very earnest attention.

#### I. THE ANTIQUITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

No writings of any other nation can be brought into competition in this respect, with those of the Jews. In proof of this assertion it may be remarked, that

Moses lived more than a thousand years before the age of Herodotus, who is reputed the father of Grecian history: and rather earlier than he flourished, Ezra and Nehemiah closed the records of the Jews.\* As another proof of the priority of the Jews to the Greeks, it appears by the confession of the Greek writers themselves, that they received the letters of their Alphabet from the Phenicians; and there are very sufficient grounds for believing that the Phenicians derived the art of writing from the Jews. The learned and acute Porphyry, who was an equal enemy both to Jews and Christians, and much attached to the learning of Greece, candidly acknowledged that Moses and the prophets who immediately succeeded him, flourished nearly a thousand years before any of the Greek philosophers.

The Books which compose the Canon of the Jewish Scriptures have the concurrence of all antiquity in favour of their originality. They were delivered to the Hebrews in their own language, with every mark of genuineness, by the persons, whose names they bear; and these persons, by recording contemporary events, constantly appealed to well-known proofs of their regard to truth. The prophetic Books in particular contain the evidences of their inspiration, as well as of the integrity and piety of their authors. The external proofs are clear and strong, as well as the internal; in consequence of which all these Books have always been preserved with the greatest care, and have been held in the highest veneration.

* Moses	-	-	-	-	B. C. 1571 years.
Herodotus	-	-	-	-	445
The former therefore preceded the latter					1126 years.
Nehemiah lived	-	-	-	-	B. C. 456

It is no less curious than important to remark the traditions preserved in the pagan world, which confirm the truth of the Pentateuch, or the five books written by Moses. The tenet of Thales, the great philosopher of Miletus, that water was the primogenial element; the doctrine of Pythagoras, that the universe was created from a shapeless mass of passive matter; the opinions, that the world was formed by an Almighty Power, who gave to man the dominion over the inferior animals; and that man in his primeval state was blessed with perfect innocence and happiness, and resided in a delightful and ever blooming paradise, descended from the earliest times. Many other parts of Grecian mythology, as well as the traditions prevalent among the various nations of the earth, and particularly among the inhabitants of the vast continent of Asia, agree with the Mosaical account of the creation. The tradition of a deluge is spread over all parts of the world, and is the epoch from which is dated the origin of all records.

The Chaldeans preserved the history of their Xisurus, who was the Noah of Moses. The Egyptians asserted that Mercury had engraved his doctrine upon columns, which had resisted the violence of a deluge. The Chinese historians record that Peyrun, a mortal beloved and protected by the Gods, saved himself in a vessel from the general inundation. The Hindoos say that the waters of the ocean spread over the surface of the whole earth, except one mountain to the north—that one woman with seven men saved themselves on this mountain with certain plants and animals. They add, in speaking of their God Vishnou, that at the deluge he transformed himself into a fish, and conducted the vessel which preserved the relics of the human race.

This vessel is likewise a subject of tradition in the northern parts of the world. See Sullivan's View of Nature, Letter 67.

That the sacrifice of animals was necessary to appease the offended gods, was a religious tenet very general and very ancient. The account of the long lives of the Patriarchs is confirmed by writers of various countries. Their primitive manners, and their mode of performing sacrifices, and offering prayers to the great Author of nature on the summits of mountains, and in the retirements of groves, agree with the descriptions of Homer, and many other early writers. Zoroaster, the great teacher of the ancient Persians, derived from the Books of Moses the first principles of his religion, his ceremonial laws, his account of the creation, of the first parents of mankind, of the Patriarchs, and particularly of Abraham, whose pure religion he professed to restore.

In the attributes and characters of the Heathen gods may be found allusions to the ancient expressions of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the customs, laws, and ceremonies of many other nations may be traced a resemblance to the Mosaical institutions. In the accounts of the deities of the Pagans, and the early heroes and benefactors of mankind, particularly in those which adorn the pages of Grecian history, are represented many of the Patriarchs and illustrious persons of Scripture. Many principles of the most eminent philosophers, many fictions of the most celebrated poets, both of Greece and Rome, and many institutions of the most renowned Heathen lawgivers, cannot fail, by their circumstances of resemblance, to direct our attention to the great Legislator of the Jews. The most venerable and ancient traditions of the world seem to contain

the parts of one original and uniform system, which was broken by the dispersion of the primeval families after the deluge, and corrupted by the revolution of ages. They were the streams which flowed through the various countries of the earth, from the great source of Mosaical history.\*

Josephus, the Jewish historian, flourished in the reign of the emperor Vespasian. He was a person of great learning and eminence, and conducted his inquiries with singular diligence, industry, and care. He corroborates the testimony of the sacred writers, and illustrates their truth; as he not only gives a regular detail of the most remarkable transactions of the Jews, but introduces considerable notices of all those people, with whom they formed alliances, or carried on wars. In his treatise against Apion, he exposes the contradictions, which occurred in the Egyptian, Chaldean, and Phenician records; vindicates the authority of the Jewish Scriptures; describes the care which was taken in their preservation; and states their superior pretensions, more particularly in point of antiquity, to the respect and reverence of mankind.†

## II. THE PROOFS OF THEIR AUTHENTICITY.

The support given by the earliest Heathen writers to the records of Scripture is very strong. The fragments of Sanchoniathon, the most ancient historian of Phenicia, who is supposed to have flourished not long

\* See Stillingfleet b. iii, c. 5. Bryant's *Mythology*, Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, and Raleigh's *History of the World*, p. 71.

† *Interpreter of Prophecy*, vol. i, p. 200. *Lardner*, vol. vii, p. 30, 259, &c.

after the death of Moses, confirm the Scriptural account of the origin of the world, and of many persons and places mentioned in the Pentateuch. Berossus the Chaldean, and Manetho the Egyptian, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, represented several circumstances conformable to the accounts given by Moses\*. They wrote indeed about the time when the Old Testament was translated into Greek: but even taking it for granted that they derived their accounts from the version of the Septuagint, their evidence is of no small importance, as it shows the honour which was paid by the most learned persons of the East to the sacred records of the Jews; and that they looked upon them as the purest and the most authentic sources of history.

The transactions and literature of the Jews were too remarkable to escape the attention of the learned and inquisitive Pagans, when Judea became a province of the Roman empire. Many particulars relative to the eminent character of Joseph, as a minister to Pharaoh, and as an inspired prophet; to the emigration of the Jews from Egypt, their miraculous passage through the Red Sea, their settlement in the Holy Land, the institutions and ceremonies of the Law, the splendour of Jerusalem in its most flourishing times, the magnificence of the Temple, and the supreme, eternal, and immutable nature of the great object of their worship, are related by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Tacitus, and Justin. These eminent writers, however erroneous in some particulars, are sufficiently correct in others; and however they may differ in some

\* Berossus and Manetho, B. C. 270. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacra, vol i, c. iii.



circumstances from each other, they agree in the great outlines of history. They show that the Jewish records were in their times thought worthy of high credit;—and that facts, well known in the world to be true and important, were faithfully related in those records.

The greatest care was taken of the books of the Old Testament in every period of the ancient church of the Jews. The original copies were deposited in the temple at Jerusalem, to serve for a sacred memorial to posterity. They were read in all the synagogues as long as the Jewish government remained; and the Jews themselves were so scrupulously observant of the strict purity and integrity of the sacred Text, as to number every letter, and remark how often it occurred. They were accurately transcribed in every age, and translations were made into different languages; so that, as copies were multiplied, securities for the purity of the text increased; and forgery and corruption, in any passage of importance, became in the course of time impracticable. The whole religion, and all the civil and sacred establishments of the Jewish people, were founded upon the books of Moses in particular, which were addressed to his contemporaries, that is to those, who had *seen* his miracles, and *heard* his laws from his own mouth, and guarded with the most zealous care the volumes which recorded them. The institutions of Moses were incorporated into the commonwealth of the Jews; the existence and support of their government depended upon them; and their religion and laws were so interwoven, that they could not be separated. Stillingfleet, *book ii, chap. i.* Their right to the land of Canaan depended upon their confession of the sovereignty of God, *who gave it to them*; and on the truth of the Mosaical

history, relative to the divine promises made to the Patriarchs. The dissensions which prevailed among the Jews and Samaritans, were such checks upon both parties, as to preserve the text of the Law in a state of purity; and the disputes which prevailed between the Pharisees and Sadducees, served equally to prevent any interpolations in the other books.

Mahomet, the founder of a new religion in Arabia, the acute and determined enemy both of Jews and Christians, who was raised up by Providence to be the scourge of the degenerate Christians of the sixth century, professed his veneration of the Patriarchs and of Moses, and revered the sanctity of the Jewish institutions. (Sale's *Al Coran*, p. 6, 16, 497, &c.) Sensible of the high esteem in which they were held among all the nations of the East, he has not only intermixed the most important facts related in them, with the absurd contents of his Law, but has endeavoured, from their expressions, to draw arguments in favour of his own mission.\* But what is the sanction of the author of the Koran to that given by the writers of the New-Testament? The Evangelists and Apostles constantly refer to these sacred books, and more particularly to the Prophecies. They apply, illustrate, explain, and quote abundant texts, not merely as human productions, then popular among their

\* "They say, become Jews, or Christians, that ye may be directed. Say nay, we follow the religion of Abraham the orthodox, who was no idolater. Say, we believe in God, and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which hath been sent down unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes; and that which was delivered unto Moses, and Jesus, and that which was delivered unto the Prophets from their Lord, &c." *Al Koran*, chap. 2. entitled the Cow.

countrymen; but because they contained the commands of God, and were the immediate declarations of the divine will. And, to bring forward an evidence of the highest authority in their favour, the Saviour of the world himself, even He who came 'expressly from heaven to bear witness of the truth, exhorted the Jews to *search the Scriptures* for that they testified of him. Frequently as he reproved the Jews for their erroneous doctrines and tradition, he never laid to their charge any corruption of their sacred books. At once to prove their authenticity and divine inspiration, *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto his disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*. In his final instructions to them before his ascension, he reminded them, (I again quote his own most sacred and most decisive expressions,) *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you; that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me*. (Luke xxiv, 44.) Our Lord, by thus adopting the common division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures, ratified the Canon of the Old Testament; and by declaring so expressly that those books contained prophecies which must be fulfilled, he established their divine inspiration; since it is an attribute of the Almighty alone to enable men to foretel future events with certainty.\*

Abundant witnesses in all succeeding ages can be brought to confirm the authenticity of these holy Scriptures. The Jews, dispersed since the destruction of

\* Bishop of Lincoln's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i, c. i.

Jerusalem over all parts of the world, have ever been prepared to suffer any hardship, rather than renounce the commands of their great Lawgiver, and reject the records of their inspired Prophets. They have, in common with the numerous Christian converts, laboured in this pious work of preserving the sacred volume unimpaired by the accidents of time, and uncorrupted by artful interpolation. One generation has transmitted a regular testimony to another, and the chain of evidence has remained unbroken for a series of ages. But where are the pure and unmixed descendants of the Greeks or Romans, to attest the genuineness of *their* most esteemed books? Where are the subjects of Solon, Lycurgus, or Numa, who at this present time conform to the institutions, and are governed by the edicts of these ancient legislators? As no such evidences are known to exist, vain is it to require them.

To the testimony we derive from the *living* descendants of the Israelites, we have nothing similar in the world for the support of ancient writings, because they not only from age to age have asserted, and still continue to assert, their authenticity, under such peculiar circumstances of oppression and foreign dominion; but adhere to the laws contained in the books in question. Their practice is a demonstrative proof of their belief; and this double evidence, consisting in their conviction of the genuineness of the books, and in the direction of their conduct by the rules those books contain, ascends higher and higher into antiquity, till passing through successive ages, we reach the precise times in which Moses and the Prophets flourished.

Convinced by the clearest arguments of the authenticity of the Old Testament, the great Newton esteemed it the proper introduction to the knowledge of

profane antiquity. He found that the periods of Judaical generations and descents, which answered to the fabulous ages of Grecian history, were exactly of the same length with those which have been measured in later times, since history has been considered as authentic. He ascertained likewise, that the Hebrew accounts coincided with the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the general course of nature; and were not like the Grecian and Roman chronology, which is in many cases founded upon improbable and arbitrary suppositions. Furnished with such an important clue to his discoveries, this great astronomer applied the principles of his favourite science to the elucidation of history. By considering the relation which subsisted between the precession of the equinoxes and the lapse of time, he rectified the whole system of profane chronology.\* Thus he diffused light over a region of darkness, and rendered the records of the Greeks and Romans clear, consistent, and probable, by the application of these principles: but so far was he from disturbing the order of events, or contradicting the computations of time stated in the sacred Books, that their truth and accuracy were invariably confirmed by his researches. Priestly's Lectures on History, p. 89, &c.

Such are some of the proofs which confirm the authenticity of the Old Testament; and from a review of them we are justified in the conclusion, that in point of strength and authority these proofs are superior to

\* The equinoctial points are found by astronomers to change their places, and go backward or westward, contrary to the order of the signs of the Zodiac. This is called their *precession*. Dr. Bradley supposes it to be a degree in about seventy years: the calculation of Sir Isaac Newton does not amount to so much.

those that can be adduced to support any other ancient writings.

### III. THE SUBJECTS OF THE BOOKS, AND CHARACTERS OF THE WRITERS.

The subjects of the Books of the Old Testament are truly wonderful and striking, and of such a nature as to surpass all monuments of profane learning, equally in importance as in antiquity. And of all the parts which compose the sacred canon, none are more curious than *Genesis*, the first book written by Moses; because it contains a sketch of the earliest history of mankind. There stand recorded the creation of the world and its inhabitants, the fall of our first parents from their state of innocence and happiness, and their banishment from the garden of Eden; the repeated and signal promises of a future restorer of the lost blessings of mankind; the history of the Patriarchs, honoured by the Revelations of Jehovah; the description of the general deluge; the dispersion of the progenitors of the human race over all the earth; the adoption of a particular family to perpetuate the remembrance, and establish the worship of the true God, and their prosperous settlement in Egypt. Instances indeed are mentioned of early depravity, and the violence of the passions, attended with suitable punishments; yet society appears under its simplest form in point of manners, and we discern no traces of the luxury and false refinement of subsequent times.

In the sacred books of the Jews is recorded an account of the descendants of Israel; a race of men selected from all others, and favoured with successive revelations of the divine will. Here are shown the

instances of their fidelity, perverseness, and disobedience; their glory, and triumphs; their disgraces, and their subjection to foreign powers. Here is seen the superintendence of a divine and especial Providence watching over innocence, suspending wrath, and taking the most signal vengeance upon unrepented offences. Here are developed the failings of the most virtuous persons, and the obdurate wickedness of confirmed sinners. Here are displayed the mixed characters even of the most excellent men, the eminent examples of faith and piety, of courage and patience, in the conduct of Abraham, Lot, Job, Joseph, Moses, David, Hezekiah, Josiah, and Daniel. And most interesting is it to observe, that the knowledge of the one true God was communicated to this people, and preserved by them alone; that they had the most sublime ideas of his nature and attributes; that a magnificent temple was erected to his honour; a regular service was instituted; holy ceremonies were performed; an order of priests of one particular family was consecrated; a pure worship was established by his express command, and regulated by his particular laws. Thus were the Jews enlightened by a knowledge of the true object of divine worship; and thus were the purity and holiness of their religious ordinances conducted at a time, when all other nations presented a wide scene of gross superstition and mental darkness; when the rest of the human race, and even the most intelligent and polished nations of Egypt and Greece, showed the most abject degradation of their nature, by prostrating themselves before idols of their own workmanship; and abused the evidence of sense, and the faculty of reason; by imputing to wood and stone the attributes of divine power.

We see likewise a succession of Prophets raised up among them, to communicate the divine will, to warn them of evils and to announce to them blessings to come.\* These holy men, ever obedient to the call of heaven, rose superior to all worldly considerations; and with a spirit of intrepidity and independence, which clearly showed that heaven was the source of their reliance, they executed their sacred commissions, unawed by the threats of kings, or the resentment of the people. They foretold remote events in times when they appeared most improbable ever to take place, and when no human foresight, and no calculation of chances, could guide them to the discovery of the particular affairs, which fulfilled their predictions. Moses, in a long and most interesting detail of threats and promises, foretold the exact manner in which his people were ordained to be happy or miserable, according as they followed or disobeyed the divine laws. At a subsequent period, when Jerusalem was laid in ruins, and the Jews were groaning under the sorrows of the Babylonish captivity, Isaiah solemnly addressed Cyrus by his name, more than a hundred years before his birth, as the deliverer of Israel, and the new founder of the Holy City.† When Babylon was shining in the meridian of her glory, and its monarchs ruled over all the nations of the East with the most uncontrolled sway, the same Prophet predicted the total subversion of their empire, and the complete desolation of their vast metropolis. That all these and numerous other predictions were exactly verified by the events, are truths confirmed by the evidence of profane, as well

\* Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. Introductory Chapter, &c.

† Isaiah, B. C. 757. Cyrus, B. C. 589. Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i, p. 130.



as sacred history. The same inspired Prophets had a much more grand and important object in view, than to declare the future dispensations of Providence to one nation in particular; for they announced in terms at first dark and mysterious, but progressively more clear and circumstantial, the future birth of a Messiah, a glorious King, a divine Legislator, who was to abolish the sacrifices and religious institutions of the Jews, and proclaim and establish a general Law for the observance and happiness of all mankind. Here the Evangelists contribute their aid to illustrate the declarations of the Prophets, and unite the history of the Old with that of the New Testament, in the most close and indissoluble bonds of union.

The historical books of Scripture, considered from the giving of the Law to Moses, to the reformation in the worship and government by Nehemiah, after the Babylonish captivity, contain a summary account of the Jewish affairs for a period of eleven centuries\*. They were evidently not intended to give a complete detail of national transactions, as their writers had a more sublime and important end in view. To illustrate the prophecies, by relating circumstances which existed at the time when they were uttered, and to show their accomplishment; to record various revelations of the Divine will, and to describe the state of religion among the Hebrews, and the various dispensations of Providence in public as well as in private occurrences, seem to have been their chief objects. Hence it is that the chain of history is sometimes broken into detached parts, and its detail is interrupted by a recital of

\* Moses, B. C. 1571. Nehemiah, B. C. 546. Gray's Key, p. 124.

private transactions. The books of Scripture occasionally assume the form, and comprise the beauties of a very interesting kind of biography. Of this nature are the several accounts of Job, Ruth, and Esther; but they are far from being unconnected with the principal design of the sacred writers; inasmuch as they show that the same divine Providence which presided over the nation at large, extended its particular care to individuals, and that the examples of private virtue were inseparable from the great interests of public welfare and happiness.

The Israelites, for many ages separated from the rest of mankind by their peculiar institutions, were little acquainted with commerce, and made small advances in those arts, which with a refinement, and a diversity of employments, introduce luxury and corruption of manners. They were governed by equal laws, and possessed nearly equal property. They admitted no hereditary distinction of rank, except in favour of the regal tribe of Judah, and the sacerdotal family of Levi. Their occupations from the earliest times were of the most simple kind and consisted in pasturage and agriculture. To guide the plough, and tend the flock, were employments which, recommended by the innocence of primeval manners, and dignified by length of time, were exercised by kings, prophets, and generals. Moses was called from feeding his flock, to conduct the Israelites to the promised land; Elisha forsook the plough, to be invested with the mantle of prophecy; and Gideon left the threshing-floor, to lead the army of his country to battle.

The country of Judea presented a scene diversified by fruitful vallies, barren rocks, and lofty mountains, and was watered by numerous streams. It produced

the palm-tree, the balsam, the vine, the olive, the fig, and all the fruits which abound in the East. From the labours of the field, and from cultivating the vine, the attention of the Israelites was regularly called by religious worship, which was intimately blended with the civil constitution of the state. The splendour of their public services, the pomp and magnificence of their rites and ceremonies, the stated recurrence of their various festivals and sacrifices, the sabbath, the passover, the celebration of the sabbatical year; and the jubilee; and more than all, the constant experience of divine interposition, filled their minds with the most awful and grand ideas, and gave them the deepest impressions of the majesty, power, goodness, and justice of God.

These were the circumstances, which combining to form their national manners, had the greatest influence upon their writings. The historical style is marked by the purest simplicity of ideas, occasionally raised to a tone of elevation. In the works of Moses there is a majesty of thought, which is most strikingly expressed in plain and energetic language. In the prophetic writings, the greatest splendour and sublimity of composition are conspicuous. They are enriched by those glowing images, and raised by that grandeur of diction, which charm the classical reader in the most admired productions of Greece and Rome. The Royal Psalmist is eloquent, dignified, and pathetic. All the beauties of composition unite in Isaiah, such is the majesty of his ideas, the propriety, beauty, and fertility of his imagery, and the elegance of his language, employed upon the noblest subjects which could possibly engage our attention. Jeremiah excels in those expressions of tenderness, which excite with

the most pleasing enthusiasm the feelings of compassion.\*

By such peculiar beauties of composition are recommended the most interesting details of events and the most faithful delineations of characters. The great Creator calls all things into existence with his omnipotent word. The first parents of mankind, innocent and happy, are blessed with his immediate converse, and enjoy the blooming groves of Paradise. Joseph, the pious, the chaste, and the wise, after having undergone great afflictions, and rising by his own extraordinary merit to an office of the highest honour in the court of Pharaoh, discovers himself in a manner the most pathetic to his repentant brethren, and is restored to his aged and affectionate father, whom he invites into Egypt to share his prosperity. The Children of Israel, guided by the divine Power, which veils its glory in a cloud, pass safely through the Red Sea, in which the hosts of the impious Pharaoh are overwhelmed. Upon the lofty summit of Mount Sinai, Moses receives the two tables of the Commandments, amid the thunder, lightning, clouds, and darkness, which obscure the great Jehovah from his eyes. The royal Psalmist sings the wonders of creation, the powers of his God, and his own defeats and triumphs. The peaceful and prosperous Solomon, whose renown was extended over all the East, rears the structure of

\* "Quid enim habet universa poesis, quid concipere potest mens humana grandius, excelsius, ardentius, quid etiam venustius et elegantius, quam quæ in sacris Hebræorum vatum scriptis occurrunt? qui magnitudinem rerum fere ineffabilem verborum pondere et carminis majestate exæquant; quorum cum nonnulli vel ipsis Græcorum poetarum fabulis sunt antiquiores, ita omnes tantu meos *sublimitate* exsuperant, quantum *vetustate* antiquissimi *antecedunt*." Lowth, *Prælect.* p. 16. See likewise, p. 7, 8, 21.

the magnificent Temple; and amid the multitudes of his adoring subjects consecrates it to the service of the one true God, in a prayer which equally attests his wisdom and piety. In the visions of futurity, Isaiah beholds the deliverance of the chosen People; the complete destruction of the great empire of Babylon, by which they were enslaved; and the promised Messiah, the Saviour of Mankind, sometimes depressed by want and sorrow, and sometimes arrayed in the emblems of divine majesty and power. He predicts the final recal of the Jews to their native land, and the wide diffusion of the Christian faith. Jeremiah sinks a weeping mourner over the ruins of his native city, deploras its calamities, and consoles his countrymen by expressly declaring, that they should never cease to be a nation to the end of the world. Daniel explains to Belshazzar the mystic characters inscribed upon the walls of his palace, and views in his wide prospect of future times, the fates of the four great empires of the world. Cyrus long before announced by Isaiah as the great subverter of the Babylonish empire, and the restorer of the glory of Jerusalem, publishes his decree for the restoration of the captive Jews; and the holy City and Temple rise from their ruins with new grandeur and magnificence. The Jews are settled and reformed by the pious care of Nehemiah, and the canon of the Scriptures is closed by Malachi. This last of the Prophets enjoins the strict observance of the Law of Moses, till the great Precursor should appear, in the spirit of Elias, to announce the approach of the Messiah, who was to establish a new and an everlasting covenant.\*

\* For these very impressive passages of the Holy Bible, see *Gen. i, ii, xlv, xlv.* *Exod. xiv, xx.* *The Psalms.* *1 Kings*

Such are a few of the interesting circumstances contained in the sacred volume of the Old Testament, which engage our attention, charm our imagination, and gratify our curiosity, while they confirm our belief in the great evidences of Revelation. In all these works we may remark the bright truths of religious instruction shining forth amid the venerable simplicity of the most ancient history, a history unrivalled for the grandeur of the ideas which it conveys, the liveliness of its descriptions, and the number of its beautiful and sublime images.

In these volumes of sacred history there is an *impartiality* of narrative, which is an undoubted characteristic of truth. If we read the Lives of Plutarch, or the History of Livy, we soon discover that these writers composed their works under the influence of many prejudices in favour of their respective countries. A veil is thrown over the defects of their heroes, but their virtues are placed in a strong light, and painted in vivid colours. In the Scriptures, on the contrary, both of the Old and the New Testament, the strictest impartiality prevails. The vices of David, Solomon, and their successors, are neither concealed nor palliated. There is no ostentation of vanity, no parade of panegyric; virtue charms with her native beauty, and vice acquires no disguise to conceal her deformity. The characters of persons are sketched, and the effects of the passions are represented without reserve or concealment; and the moral to be drawn from each description is so obvious, as to account for the frequent omission of

viii. Isaiah ii, vi, ix, x, xi, xiv, xxviii, xxxii, xl, xlii, lx, lxi, lxiii, lxv, and more particularly liii. Lament. i, &c. Daniel v, vii.  
Ezra vii. Nehem. xiii. Malachi iii, iv.

remarks and applications. The abject condition of the Jews, when prohibited the use of weapons of war by the victorious Philistines; their relapses into idolatry, their perverseness of disposition, and their various defeats and captivities, with every circumstance of private as well as public disgrace, are recorded without palliation or reserve. Always rising superior to the motives which induce other authors to violate the purity and degrade the majesty of truth, these writers keep one great and most important end constantly in view, and show the various methods by which the providence of God effected his gracious designs; how he produced good from evil, and employed the sins and follies of mankind as the instruments of his gracious purposes.

An acquaintance with the affairs of the Jewish nation forms the first link in the chain of ancient records. Thus we may observe the connexion which subsists between the branches of sacred and profane history. We place the works of pagan writers in their proper situation, and give them additional value by making them subservient to the cause of religion, and instrumental in the illustration of revealed truth. If the student is not called upon by professional inducements to drink the sacred streams at their source, by reading the Scriptures in the original language, he may rest contented with translations; and it seems to be a well-founded opinion among the learned, that he may rely with confidence upon the general fidelity of our English version.

To peruse the holy Scriptures is one of the first employments of childhood. We cannot fail to congratulate ourselves that our time has been thus occupied, when our judgment is sufficiently mature to form a

comparative estimate of the various productions of literature, and we are fully able to determine their usefulness. And it will be found, as life is verging towards its close, when every other book begins to be insipid and uninteresting, that the HOLY BIBLE, which includes the most ancient records of time, the clearest evidences of a divine revelation, and the joyful promises of eternal happiness, will attract us more and more, as old age advances, and will afford us that divine solace and inexpressible satisfaction which no other writings can give.

“ I durst appeal to the judgment of a candid reader, that there is no history so pleasant as the sacred. Set aside the majesty of the inditer, none can compare with it for the magnificence and antiquity of the matter, the sweetness of compiling, the strange variety of memorable occurrences: and if the delight be such, what shall the profit be esteemed of that which was written by God for the salvation of Men? I confess no thoughts did ever more sweetly steal me and time away than those which I have employed in this subject: and I hope none can equally benefit others; for if the mere relation of these holy things be profitable, how much more when it is reduced to use?” *Bishop Hall’s Meditations.*

In conformity with these observations as to the excellence of the Scriptures, was the opinion of the late Sir William Jones a person, as much distinguished by the soundness of his judgment, as by his extensive and various learning. In the last leaf of his Bible these words were written\*: “*I have regularly and attentively read these holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more*

\* Seward’s Anecdotes, vol. v, p. 176.



*simplicity and beauty, more pure morality, more instant history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in what age or language they may have been composed."*

#### CHAPTER IV.

### THE HISTORY OF GREECE.

THE country of Greece presents a variety of the most pleasing prospects, as it is well watered by rivers and lakes, divided by lofty mountains and verdant vales, favoured by a happy temperature of climate, and enriched by fertility of soil. The sea, abounding with all kinds of marine productions, and affording the most favourable opportunities for commerce, nearly surrounds its winding shores. Such is the appearance of the country, which, according to the most authentic records of history, was made in very early times a settlement of colonists from Egypt and Phenicia, who, mixing with the natives, built towns, and formed several communities independent of each other. These eastern emigrants brought with them many traditions, which, being afterwards blended with early Grecian history, became the copious sources of mythology. The various inventions and arts which they introduced among the original inhabitants of Greece, contributed to augment their comforts, and civilize their manners. And as in the general outlines of their religion, government, and arts, the similarity of the political and religious institutions of the East may be traced, Greece furnishes us with an internal evidence of the origin of her colonists.

In the early period of this history there is so great a mixture of Eastern with Grecian stories, and so much confusion of chronology extending through a long series of oral traditions, that an attempt to separate truth from falsehood is as arduous as it is fruitless. Fully sensible of this difficulty, and desirous of remedying it by a pleasing, although an imperfect expedient, Thucydides and Strabo, who are both remarkable for their accuracy and judgment, have considered Homer in the light of an Historian.\* That their confidence in the truth of the narrative parts of his Poems was not improperly placed, will appear from considering, that in the rude ages of society the song of the Bard was the only record of past events; and although many of his descriptions may be fictitious, yet some regard to truth, some representation of events and actions which really took place, must have been the ground of the early reputation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The connexion, clearness, and consistency of many anecdotes preserved in them, appear very great, when compared with the dark and uncertain traditions of those early ages. The finished picture of primeval institutions and manners, in the delineation of which Homer descends to many minute particulars, is no less pleasing than satisfactory. He gives a complete view of the religion, government, and arts of his countrymen at the time of the Trojan war, which took place at the very remote period of more than eleven centuries before the Christian era.† A strong argument in favour of his fidelity may be drawn from the accuracy

\* Thucydides, vol. i, p. 7, 16, 18. Edit. Bipont. Strabo, lib. ii, p. 774.

† Homer flourished B. C. 907 years.

of his geographical descriptions, which have been verified by the actual observation of many intelligent and inquisitive travellers. And it may incline us more readily to concur with Thucydides and Strabo in thinking, that he truly records the leading facts, and fairly represents the state of manners, at the time of the Trojan war, if we recollect, that in the unaffected energy of his descriptions, and his account of the simplicity of ancient manners, he agrees very remarkably with the writers of the Old Testament, and suggests to us the similarity of the character, which prevailed between the patriarchs of Canaan and the heroes of Greece.

Greece was divided into a number of unconnected states, distinguished by different forms of government, and remarkable for frequent revolutions. Yet as the political importance of them all was for the most part relative, and depended, especially in the latter and more celebrated periods of their history, upon their connexion with Athens and Lacedemon, these distinguished Republics ought to be considered with a more immediate view to their RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, ARTS, MANNERS, and CONQUESTS.

### I. THE RELIGION OF GREECE.

From the Egyptian and other nations, to whom the Greeks were indebted for their earliest laws, they derived their established religion. To the worship of the twelve principal divinities, the gratitude of succeeding ages added the deification of heroes, and legislators renowned for their important services to society. Various degrees of adoration were paid to the Gods, and to the souls of departed heroes. Temples were erected,

blessed, because he is the husband of Helen, and the son in law of Jupiter. *Odyss.* iv, l. 56. No incentives to goodness, from the consideration of a future state, are held out by the older poets to the female sex, or to the ignoble or vulgar, however pure their conduct or exemplary their virtues. In later times we find that Pindar extends his rewards to good men in general; but Euripides is sometimes sceptical, and Iphigenia without hesitation expresses her disbelief of the popular mythology.

It is well remarked by the ingenious and learned Jortin, "That it gives us pleasure to trace in Homer the important doctrine of a supreme God, a providence, a free agency in man, supposed to be consistent with fate or destiny; a difference between moral good and evil, inferior gods, or angels, some favourable to men, others malevolent; and the immortality of the soul: but it gives us pain to find these notions so miserably corrupted, that they must have had a very weak influence to excite men to virtue, and to deter them from vice." Jortin, *Dissertation vi*, p. 245. This excellent observation may be applied to the state of opinions even in the most enlightened times of Greece, when the credulity and ignorance of the vulgar, and the errors and doubts of the greatest philosophers, proved the *necessity* and the *importance* of the Christian revelation, with respect both to the duties of man, and the incentives to the discharge of those duties, arising from his final destination.

The characters of the two great legislators of Sparta and Athens were evidently very different. Lycurgus was distinguished by the vigour and the inflexibility of his disposition. Solon was mild, circumspect, and compliant. The marks of their tempers were visibly

impressed upon their respective political establishments.

## II. SPARTA.

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the constitution of Sparta, previous to the time of LYCURGUS, any farther then to observe, that there were two hereditary kings, or presidents, whose power he controlled by giving an equal authority to twenty-eight senators.\* The kings were commanders of the armies, and high priests of the temples. Of the senators was composed the executive and legislative council of the state, and with them all laws originated. The assembly of the people was invested with the power of electing the senators; they could give a simple negative, or affirmative, to the measures proposed to them, but had no right to discuss their propriety. Lycurgus allotted to every family an equal share of land, prohibited the use of gold and silver, and made iron money alone current, with a view to check the avarice of his subjects. He forbid foreign travel, lest their morals should be corrupted by an intercourse with effeminate nations. He instituted public tables, at which even the kings of Sparta were required to share the coarsest viands with their people, and to set examples of the most rigid temperance. To produce a hardy and vigorous race of men, he caused the women to be employed in all athletic exercises. The children were carefully inspected as soon as born; the well-proportioned and healthy were delivered to the public nurses; and those

\* B. C. 884 years. Plutarch's Life of Lycurgus. Mitford's Greece, vol. i, c. v.

who were deformed, or sickly, were exposed to perish in woods and mountains. Celibacy was held disreputable; yet the rights of female honour and marriage were not secured from violation: for provided the child which was born by promiscuous intercourse was strong and robust, no inquiry was made to ascertain its father. All the children of the Spartans were considered as the offspring, or rather the property, of the state; and the business of their public education consisted in accustoming them to bear the cravings of hunger and thirst, and endure the scourge of discipline, and every degree of pain, with patience, and even exultation. The passions of the young Spartan were so enflamed by patriotic ardour, and his body was so hardened by constant exercise, as to make him eager to undertake, and powerful to accomplish, every exploit for the glory of his country.

As Lycurgus wished his people to enjoy most complete independence, he provided the means of security against foreign attacks by establishing the strictest military discipline. In order however to guard against the desire of conquest, he forbade his subjects to engage too frequently in war with the same nations. This was the curb by which he endeavoured to restrain their military ardour: the desire of conquest however was a disease inherent in the vitals of his system, and it frequently broke out in succeeding times, as often as any temptation occurred of extending their dominions. By institutions the most severe ever imposed on mankind Lycurgus formed the habits of his people, and even far surpassed other legislators, by regulating their conduct in many circumstances, which are generally supposed not to come within the province of legal restrictions. He prescribed rules of the most

rigid abstemiousness, inculcated respect to age, enjoined modesty of behaviour, and promoted the constant intercourse of the old and young. In other governments, many valuable institutions arise out of casual circumstances; the character of the people, and particular situation of affairs, which sometimes direct and impel the legislator in the formation of his system: but in Lacedæmon almost every rule seems to have sprung from the comprehensive mind of Lycurgus, and his institutions were eminently his own. Before his death he saw every part of his political machine set in motion. The Spartans exulted in their new strength; and their desire to exert it was so ardent, that they were soon distinguished among the neighbouring states as a warlike and formidable people. For many ages they manifested a firm adherence to the will of their lawgiver; and, not to adduce other examples of their strict adherence to their original institutions, the monument erected in the straits of Thermopylæ, to record the glorious fall of Leonidas, and his brave associates, expressed in an inscription exactly characteristic of the genius and the spirit of the nation, that they maintained their post to the last extremity, in obedience to the orders of their country.\*

The reverence of the Spartans for old age, their abstemiousness, perfect discipline, and great bravery, must not so far blind our judgment, as to induce us to palliate the imperfections of their laws, and the impropriety of their conduct. The honour in which they held the successful perpetration of theft, their cruelty to their slaves, their inhumanity to children,

\* Herod. lib. vii, sect. 455. Herod. lib. vii, sect. 219. Mitford, vol. i, p. 407. This writer's relation of the battle is peculiarly distinct and accurate. See Plutarch's Lives, vol. i, p. 292.



the indelicacy of their conduct to women, and the insensibility and masculine energy of character, with which they endeavoured to inspire them, all unite to mark a ferocious and a barbarous people. The improvement of the mind, and the purest feelings of nature, were sacrificed to severe discipline, and martial occupations. They extended the same rigour to their allies, which they exercised at home; and thus became the objects of hostility and aversion. By a strange inconsistency in their laws, they were trained to arms, but stopped in the career of conquest; they were made a nation of warriors, yet forbidden to pursue a flying enemy, or to enrich themselves with his spoils.

Eminent as they were in the field of battle, both kings and generals were incapable of composing the histories of their campaigns, and no book has ever been transmitted to modern times, written by a genuine Spartan of the Doric race. They preferred the exercise of arms to the cultivation of letters, and left their exploits to be handed down to posterity by their enemies.

During the reign of fourteen successive kings, through the long period of five hundred years, their power and influence were felt throughout Greece; and for a considerable part of that period, the glory of Sparta eclipsed the other states. But in process of time the austere manners of her warriors were relaxed by victory and luxury. The universal applause with which they were welcomed, and the rapacity with which they divided the spoils of Athens, when that city was taken by Lysander, were strong indications of their degeneracy. Of this gradual departure from the institutions of their great legislator, their subsequent

venality, luxury, and avarice, were sufficient proofs. Polybius, lib. vi, p. 685, tom. i.

### III. ATHENS.

A fairer order of civil polity is displayed in the constitution of Athens; a constitution which furnished not only a model for the laws of Rome, but for most of the nations of modern Europe. It was a regular system of jurisprudence, extending to every class of citizens. The most judicious writers agree, that those improvements, which formed the peculiar merit of Athens, were introduced by Solon, about two centuries and a half after the reign of Lycurgus.

The situation of Attica naturally directed the attention of its inhabitants to commerce, and naval affairs. They possessed a country, which although fruitful in vines and olives, was not adequate to the support of its inhabitants, without a supply of foreign produce. This deficiency naturally pointed out the sea to them as the proper sphere for their exertions, and in process of time they rose to the highest eminence, as a commercial state; their great intercourse with strangers gave a particular direction to their laws, and promoted that urbanity of manners, by which they were so eminently distinguished.

SOLON vested the sovereign power in the general assembly of the people, which was composed of free men, whose age exceeded thirty years.\* In order to obviate the evils, which a pure and unmixed democracy must unavoidably have produced, when vested with an absolute and uncontrouled authority, he established

\* B. C. 594. Plutarch's Life of Solon. Mitford, vol. i, chap. 6.

a balance of power in the council of five hundred. The members of this council were appointed every year by lot, were possessed of certain legal qualifications, and more particularly were obliged to stand the test of a severe scrutiny into their moral character, before they were invested with their high office. They had the direction of all political concerns, and prepared business for the assembly of the people, to whom no measure was proposed without their previous sanction. Solon likewise restored the court of Areopagus, so much celebrated for the pure administration of justice, and the unsullied character of its members, who exercised a judicial power, and tried criminals for capital offences. It was their duty to inspect the general behaviour of the citizens, superintend the conduct of youth, and take care they were educated in a manner suitable to their rank. But their greatest privileges consisted in a power of reversing the decrees of the popular assembly, in rescuing the condemned from their sentence, and condemning the acquitted. Of the justice, impartiality, and wisdom of the Areopagus, in the exercise of their supreme authority, no higher idea can be given than by the lofty panegyric of the great Roman orator, who affirmed, that this council was as essential to the prosperity of Athens, as the providence of the Gods to the government of the world. By the establishment of these two assemblies, a large mixture of aristocracy was infused into the commonwealth, and the administration of public affairs was secured against much of the danger of popular tumult and violence.

In addition to the general assembly of the people, the Areopagus, and the council of five hundred, there were no less than ten courts of judicature; four for *criminal*, and six for civil causes. Over these presided

nine archons, who were invested with great authority, and the magistrate who for the sake of pre-eminence, was styled "the Archon," exercised a religious, as well as a civil jurisdiction. But the merits of the causes, and the validity of the evidence which were submitted to their consideration, were decided by a certain number of men, selected from the citizens at large. This Athenian establishment may bring to our mind one of the most celebrated institutions in the legal polity of Great Britain; and the experience of Englishmen, from the days of the immortal Alfred to the present times, can give the fullest testimony to the general impartiality, steady justice, and singular excellence of our *Trial by Jury*.

Although the number of inhabitants both in Sparta and Athens was considerable, yet the number of those who had a share in the government was small in proportion to the rest. Solon classed his citizens in four divisions; the rich according to their property were enrolled in the first, second, and third; and to the fourth, which included the most indigent, was denied the participation of any employments in the state. The number of slaves when compared to citizens was very large. From a computation made in the time of Demetrius Phalerius, it appears, that there were more than twenty thousand Athenians qualified to vote in the public assembly; at the same time, the slaves in actual bondage amounted to twenty times that number. (B.C. 317.) Plutarch has enabled us to ascertain the numbers of the Lacedemonians at one particular period, as he states, that by the division of their lands, a competent subsistence was procured for thirty-nine thousand families. Their slaves appear not to have been fewer in proportion than those of Athens, even after the cruel

massacres to lessen their number. It was not merely by the effects of conquest, that so many were reduced to a servile state, as was the case of the unfortunate Helots; but many of the citizens of Athens were driven by extreme indigence to sell themselves to the wealthy.

Fully convinced how much such employments would contribute to the welfare of his country, Solon gave the greatest encouragement to agriculture and commerce; and thus pointed out to his countrymen the true and permanent sources of comfort and opulence. Such was the liberal spirit of his laws, that the rich while they exerted power, could not oppress the poor, who were allowed the enjoyment of considerable privileges. The tyrant Pisistratus and his successors infringed this fair and equitable plan of government, (B. C. 560.) and the struggles of the Athenians for their rights in succeeding times, conspired, with other causes, to involve them in wars with the Persians. Greater concessions, made to the populace at various times, contributed still more to undermine the institutions of Solon; and before the age of Demosthenes, the ancient spirit of the constitution was extinguished, and the whole direction of the state was abandoned to the arts of factious and venal demagogues.

The different laws of Sparta and Athens produced, in the course of time, a corresponding difference in their manners. The performances of the theatre, the popular assemblies, and the sacred festivals, employed the inhabitants of Athens, while the Spartans, indulging in no amusement or relaxation, were incessantly busied in the exercises of war. The streets of Athens resounded with the lively notes of music, and their songs were dictated by the tender passions of pity and

love: the poets of Sparta rehearsed only the stern virtues of departed heroes, or roused her sons to martial exploits by the description of battles, victory, and death. In Athens the sportive sallies of wit, and the gay images of fancy, gave a peculiar vivacity to social intercourse: the seriousness of a Spartan was manifested in his cautious reserve, his grave deportment, and the peculiar conciseness of his sharp and pointed repartee; the virtues of a Spartan were gloomy and austere; the dissipation of an Athenian was engaging and agreeable. The one was an illiterate soldier, whose character was formed by martial discipline alone; the other was a man of genius, of taste, and of letters, who enjoyed the advantages of refinement and knowledge.\* The moroseness of the Spartan was increased by holding no intercourse with other nations; whereas by the laws of Solon, strangers were invited to Athens, and were admitted to all the privileges of citizens. In Athens liberty of action was shown in every indulgence of social pleasure; in Lacedemon the spirit of society, divested of its charms to amuse and to enliven, was made subservient to the affairs of the state. The temper of Lacedemon was depressed by excessive subjection, while that of her rival, rendered arrogant and vain by licentiousness, was remarkable for a restless activity, and capricious fickleness. Impatient both of freedom and slavery, these great republics had few principles in common except glory and ambition; and they continually embarrassed each other in the execution of their respective projects to obtain the sove

\* This contrast of character is finely touched by Pericles in his celebrated Oration on the Athenians slain in the Peloponnesian war. Thucyd. lib. 2, p. 57. tom. 2. Editor. Bipont.

reignty of Greece. The spirit of independence, however, was for the most part predominant in the other states; and the yoke either of Sparta or Athens was regarded as heavy and intolerable. Discordant as their respective interests were, a train of events succeeded, which caused them to suspend their animosities, to unite in a general alliance, and to equip their fleets, and lead forth their armies, not only to repel a formidable invasion, but to avert the storm which threatened the destruction of their political existence.

Among the colonies of Greece, settled upon the coasts of Asia Minor, the Ionians occupied the most pleasant and fertile territories. In order to resist the force of the Persian power, which was exerted to crush their insurrection, they solicited the aid of Athens, their mother country. Reinforced by her assistance, they burnt the ancient city of Sardis; and although they were defeated after the accomplishment of this daring enterprise, the resentment of the Persian monarch was roused to inflict vengeance on the Athenians for their interference.\* Such was the immediate cause of those memorable wars, which contributed to mature the martial genius of the Greeks; and the interesting accounts of which gave splendour, dignity, and glory, to the most authentic pages of their history.

The train of events, to which this dissension led, involved likewise the most important interests of the Persians; for the wars, begun upon slight grounds with the Greeks, terminated at last in the subversion of their empire.

\* Herodot. lib. vii, sect. 382. edit. Wesseling. Mitford, vol. i, p. 315.

## IV. THE MOST GLORIOUS AGE OF GREECE.

Of all the expeditions recorded in ancient history, that which was carried on against Greece by the Persians is mentioned as the most formidable, whether the great forces which were brought into the field, or the obstacles which they surmounted previous to their engagement with their enemies, be considered. The minute and exact relation given by Herodotus of the vast preparations made by Xerxes, and the ardour with which he pursued his romantic enterprise, contribute to raise the reputation and glory of the Greeks to the highest pitch, when we consider the apparently inadequate means of their defence and resistance. (Herod. lib. vii, sect. 391, &c.) Yet what was the success of the vain despot of innumerable hordes of undisciplined barbarians, when opposed to the determined valour and confirmed discipline of regular armies, commanded by generals of consummate talents and approved experience? The Historian above mentioned will give us the most satisfactory answer to this question.\*

The signal victory obtained in the plains of Marathon over the Persians, was effected by the sagacity,

\* The Greek Historians vary in their accounts of the number of people who followed Xerxes to the invasion of Greece, from 2 to 6 millions. Those who have any knowledge of military affairs assure us that it is utterly impossible to conduct such a multitude of people through any country, and much more to conduct *undisciplined barbarians* through a very extensive, and, probably, uncultivated country. The whole story is a ridiculous fable, and believed by none but classical scholars, whose judgment is warped by the prejudices of education. See Richardson's Dissertations. Editor.



experience, and valour of Miltiades\*. The fall of Leonidas and his illustrious Spartans in the straits of Thermopylæ, taught Xerxes to respect their unexampled prowess, and to regret a victory obtained over a small band of heroes, by the loss of the choicest soldiers of his army. (B. C. 480.) The Athenians, abandoning their native city, trusted their fortune to the sea, and under the conduct of Themistocles, engaged the fleet of Xerxes near the island of Salamis†. From a lofty throne on Mount Egialos the Persian monarch observed the fatal action, and witnessed the total destruction of his vast navy. Æschyli Persæ, l. 463, &c. The battle of Platæa, established the renown of Pausanias, and his victory was rewarded with the costly spoils of the Persian camp. On the same day the Greeks were equally successful at the promontory of Mycale in Ionia, where they devoted the rich camp and powerful fleet of the enemy to the flames. These signal events restored liberty to the fairest portion of Asia, where the Greek colonies were planted, and completely frustrated the designs of Xerxes to enslave the nations of Europe. At a later period, the astonishing retreat of the ten thousand, who had espoused the cause of the younger Cyrus against his brother Artaxerxes, under the command of the youthful Xenophon, through a long tract of hostile country, kept alive the spirit of superiority, and taught Alexander the Great that the conquest of the East might be achieved by Grecian troops. B. C. 354.

\* B. C. 490. Herodot. lib. vi, sect. 109. Mitford, vol. i, c. 9.

† B. C. 480. Mitford's Greece, vol. i, p. 389, &c. Herodotus, lib. viii, sect. 485. Plutarch, vol. i, p. 280, 303.

For half a century after the repulse of the armies of Darius and Xerxes, Athens maintained, without controul, the pre-eminence of her power. The farther progress of the Athenians, in extending their dominions, was assisted by colonization and commerce. Their navies rode the seas in triumph, and their merchants exchanged the superfluous productions of Attica for the choicest fruits of distant countries. The large and fertile island of Eubœa was numbered among their territories; their dominion extended over the Asiatic coast for the space of a thousand miles, from Cyprus to the Thracian Bosphorus, and over forty intermediate islands. They planted colonies on the winding shores of Macedon and Thrace, and commanded the coasts of the Euxine Sea from Pontus to Chersonesus Taurica, or Crim Tartary. These trophies of naval power were erected, not over ignorant barbarians, but over men who had the same language and laws, the same arts and lineage, who had every thing common with their mother country, except skill in navigation, and prowess in the field.

And here we pause to contemplate the striking qualities of those chiefs, who distinguished themselves so much in the service of liberty and Greece, when the Persians were driven from her shores. The illustrious persons, who most contributed to raise Athens to its highest pitch of martial glory were Miltiades, Themistocles, Cimon, and Aristides. Miltiades united the most acute penetration into the designs of the enemy, to a perfect acquaintance with his own army; and when it was necessary to hazard an engagement, he always displayed his talents in choosing such a field of battle as gave him a decided advantage. Themistocles acquired the greatest renown by directing the

whole attention of his countrymen to naval affairs, and securing the command of the ocean. Aristides, equally illustrious for his integrity, steadiness, and moderation, shared the glory of Miltiades in the plains of Marathon, and was eminently distinguished by his military talents both at Salamis and Platæa. By his judicious conduct he strengthened the Grecian confederacy, and provided ample supplies for the continuance of the war. Cimon, equal in courage to Themistocles and Miltiades, and superior in integrity of conduct, the liberal and disinterested benefactor of his indigent countrymen, brought the navy of Athens to such a state of perfection, and encountered the enemy with such success, that Persia, degraded and beaten both by sea and land, was confined to the limits of her own empire.

It is however melancholy, after viewing these illustrious persons in the meridian of their fame, to remark the storms of misfortune which obscured and harassed some parts of their lives. Miltiades, persecuted by a relentless faction, died in prison of the wounds he had received in the service of his country. (Mitford, vol. i, p. 351. Vol. ii, p. 33, 85, &c.) Aristides, Themistocles, and Cimon were condemned to exile; and Phocion, the despiser of the gold of Alexander, and the successful opposer of the Macedonians, suffered death by a decree of the people. Such were the rewards bestowed upon persons the most eminent for military talents and public services under a democratical government!\* The hatred even of that honourable ambition which was excited by the praise of the people themselves, and encouraged by their most

\* The author neglects to inform his readers that the Grecian and Roman populace were as ignorant and brutal as savages, and more vicious than civilized people. Editor.

distinguished favours; the most trifling apprehension of an invasion of their liberty, the jealousy of aspiring talents, and a temper capricious and volatile, hurried the popular assemblies of Athens into acts of cruelty, ingratitude, and oppression, against their most deserving patriots, and their greatest benefactors.

Nor was less severity in many instances exercised against artists and philosophers. Phidias, the most excellent of sculptors, was falsely accused of embezzling part of the gold he had received for decorating the statue of Minerva, and closed his life in prison. (B. C. 432.) Anaxagoras, who founded the principles of a pure philosophy, upon the investigation of the works of nature, was prosecuted for a charge of impiety, and driven into exile. Even Socrates, his amiable and unoffending disciple, the reformer of the corrupt manners of youth, and the teacher of the most rational and sublime morality that ever was inculcated by a heathen sage, became the victim of party cabal and popular ridicule, and was condemned to suffer death. B. C. 400.

We have already observed that these were not the only sufferers under the Grecian forms of government. The most numerous class of the inhabitants of Greece consisted of slaves, a description of persons, who without any regard to their possessing the same powers and faculties, both of body and mind, as their masters, were wholly abandoned to the mercy of their despotic will. They were employed in the most degrading occupations, and, without enjoying the privilege of appealing for redress to the civil magistrate, or speaking in their own defence in a court of justice, were, upon the most trivial pretences, chastised with blows and scourging, and condemned to the rack. No hopes of future

good alleviated their hard condition; for although with a degree of refined policy their increase was encouraged, they had nothing to bequeath to their offspring but an inheritance of misery, and a condition of degraded humanity worse than that of the brute creation.\*

In Athens, it must be confessed, they were treated with less cruelty, allowed more freedom of conduct, and were in many cases permitted to claim the protection of the laws. Their courage in war was sometimes recompensed by the gift of liberty; yet even in a state which boasted to be the nurse of freedom, and the mistress of refinement; there was a public slave market. The Spartans disdained the occupations of agriculture and trade, and committed every low and mechanical employment to the wretched descendants of the inhabitants of Helos, whose city they had rased for refusing to pay them tribute. In return for their faithful services these unfortunate men were treated in the most rigid and barbarous manner, and the dexterity with which their inhuman masters could surprise and destroy an enemy by ambuscade, was frequently practised upon their wretched domestics, while labouring in large parties in the fields.

The conduct of the Greeks to their slaves seems to prove, that they esteemed liberty and its blessings their own exclusive privilege. It is indeed a singular inconsistency in their character, that at the time when they were exercising despotic sway over their wretched domestics, the orators were employed in the most severe invectives against arbitrary power, and all Greece

\* Mitford, vol. i, p. 210, 254, 270. Plutarch's *Lives*, vol. i, p. 139. Porter's *Antiquit.* vol. i, p. 55.

was roused to oppose the tyrants of Persia and Macedon. Rome also, even in the periods of her history most remarkable for the extent of knowledge, refinement, and civilization, boasted of the multitude of her slaves. Their wrongs and their afflictions fixed a stain upon the nation equally indelible with that of Greece. In *modern* times, the same oppressive institution has been continued, but attended with circumstances of cruelty respecting the modes by which slaves are procured, which would put a Roman, or a Greek to the blush. The innocent and wild natives of the forests and deserts are snatched from their beloved shores, torn from every tender connexion, and condemned to imprisonment and chains, during a tedious and painful voyage, which is only a prelude to greater afflictions. The lamentations of Africa, for the loss of her unoffending natives, are heard from Guinea to the Cape of Good Hope. The eternal laws of justice, the tears of humanity, and the mild and merciful principles of Christianity, call for an abolition of this infamous traffic in human flesh. But the greedy Europeans, even those who disgrace the names of Protestants and of Englishmen, listen only to the voice of avarice: their miserable slaves are still condemned to drag the galling chains of bondage, while many of their rigid masters are regardless of their entreaties, their sufferings, and even of their despair.

#### V. GRECIAN WOMEN.

The Grecian women continued to be kept in seclusion and retirement, even in the most refined times, from a respect to ancient customs. Their residence was limited to a remote part of the house, which took

of Greece by the attachment of patriotism, but supplied the best foundations for their literary fame. The triumphs obtained over the Persians are consecrated to endless renown by the works of *Æschylus*, *Lysias*, *Isocrates*, *Demosthenes*, *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Xenophon*.\*

Our surprise when we remark the small number of those Greeks, who on such distinguished occasions vanquished very superior numbers of Persians, will be diminished when we consider the comparative state of military education and discipline. The Greeks acquired by their gymnastic exercises a robust constitution, and agility of limbs. The successful competitor for the crown of victory, by running the race, hurling the spear, or driving the chariot, obtained no less renown for himself than he reflected on his family and his country; and he was exalted in the opinion of the applauding multitudes to the summit of human felicity. The post of honour in battle was the reward of his courage, alacrity, and skill in the Olympic contests. Their frequent exercise in war enured the Greeks to hardships and fatigue, and accustomed them to those rapid movements in the field, which frequently decided the fate of armies. Those who signalized themselves in the battles of *Marathon*, *Salamis*, and *Platæa*, had before obtained rewards at the public games. There the flame of emulation was kindled, which afterwards burned with inextinguishable ardour, wherever they stimulated each other by the most powerful considerations, to fight for the temples of their gods, the tombs

\* *Æschylus* flourished B. C. 485. *Herodotus* 445. *Thucydides* 426. *Lysias* 412. *Xenophon* 400. *Isocrates* 377. *Demosthenes* 350.

of their ancestors, and the safety of their wives and children.

Their close and firm phalanx, formed of the most robust and hardy youth in the front ranks, and the most steady veterans in the rear, was scarcely to be resisted by any superiority of undisciplined numbers. Upon their heads they wore helmets of iron, their bodies were covered with coats of mail, and protected by massy bucklers, their legs were fenced with brazen greaves, and their offensive weapons were two-edged swords, and long spears. The Persians on the contrary, in comparison with the troops of Greece, formed only an irregular crowd, composed of various nations.\* Their weapons of attack were darts, and bows and arrows; their left hands supported light targets of osier; upon their heads they wore silken turbans, and their bodies were covered with plates of thin metal. But their inferiority, when compared with their enemies, was in no respect so manifest, as in the want of emulation and public spirit. Their minds were enervated by the enjoyment of wealth and luxury, and fettered by the bondage of tyranny. They were insensible to that love of glory, and to that pure and disinterested spirit of enterprise, which fired the breast of every Grecian soldier, and prompted him to seek the field of battle, as the noblest sphere for the exercise of his talents.

\* Travels of Anacharsis, vol. ii, p. 134, 167. Mitford's Greece, vol. i, p. 366. There is a full and poetical enumeration of the troops that followed Xerxes, in the beginning of the *Perse* of Æschylus. He describes what he saw, for he fought at Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa. He represents the Persian army as chiefly consisting of cavalry, and armed in the manner I have mentioned.



“ While the army of Xerxes was recommencing their march from Thermopylæ, some Arcadians were tempted by the fame of the great king's riches and liberality to offer their services to him. Herodotus seems to relate their story, not more for the purposes of eulogy, than of admonition to his country. They were introduced, he says, to the presence of Xerxes, and being asked what was doing in Greece, they answered with great simplicity, that it was the season of the Olympian games, and that consequently the Greeks were amusing themselves with seeing athletic exercises and horse-races. Being again asked what was the reward of the conquerors in those games, they answered, an olive garland. Upon which Tritan-tæchmes, a prince of the blood-royal of Persia, exclaimed, O Mardonius, what a people have you brought us to fight against, who contend among themselves, not for riches, but for virtue!” Mitford's Greece, vol. i, p. 394.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE HISTORY OF GREECE CONTINUED.

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#### ARTS AND LITERATURE.

THE same spirit of competition which roused the Grecian cities to contend for victory and renown, excited them to a rivalry of talents. As soon as the apprehensions of danger from the inroads of barbarians were removed, they began to cultivate the arts of elegance; and the defeat of the Persian power, and the death of Alexander the Great, containing an intermediate space of 180 years, displayed the genius of Greece shining with its brightest splendour. The name of the painter and the sculptor was celebrated in festivals; their works were exhibited at the public games, and they were reputed to confer, by every specimen of their art, distinguished honour upon their country. The monuments of their talents reflected lustre upon their character, and gave it the highest respectability; as it was their noble province to express the likeness of heroes, and to embody the perfections of the gods.\* To be publicly distinguished

\* For the causes of the superiority of the Greek artists, see Winkelmann's elegant and pleasing work, tom. ii, p. 1, &c. A beautiful chapter on the Origin, Progress, and Decline of Arts

with higher honours than his competitors, was the great object of the artist, and his unremitting and ardent efforts to excel them gave to his works that grace, beauty, and spirit, that exquisite expression of passions, and appropriate dignity of character, which mark the Venus de Medici, the Apollo Belvidere, and the Laocoon. And if the opinion of some modern connoisseurs be well founded, that these admirable statues are the productions of *later* artists, what must we conclude the *originals* of such masterly copies to have been? Certainly such as to raise our ideas to the highest pitch of attainable perfection.

The arts called forth by the most lively images the great events and characters of history. Every public edifice in Athens was filled with the statues of warriors, magistrates, legislators, philosophers and orators. In one place stood Miltiades, frowning destruction on Persia; in another, the placid Socrates, the thoughtful Solon, and the empassioned Demosthenes. Every street presented an Athenian with some striking example of valour, wisdom, or patriotism. Wherever he turned his eyes he saw some monument raised to perpetuate the renown of his ancestors; and the precious tribute of the arts, so liberally paid to all persons of genius, courage, and virtue, gave the keenest ex-

in Greece, may be found in tom. i. p. 37. tom. ii, c. i. For a beautiful description of the Venus de Medici see Spence's *Polymetis*, p. 66. Winkelmann, tom. ii, p. 75—the Appollo Belvidere, Spence, p. 83. Winkelmann, tom. iii, p. 195.—the Laocoon, tom. i, p. 68.

“The most famous *apographum* or copy of our day is the Venus de Medici. The attitude of this statue, like the works of Polyclethus, proves it to be a copy of the Venus of Gnidus, and the inscription it bears is regarded by Mr. Marietti as another forgery.” Pauw, vol. ii, p. 70.

citement to the display of every species of excellence.

Thus is displayed to our view a prospect most delightful to every cultivated mind; for we behold Greece in her most flourishing state, adorned by literature, arts, and sciences. The nature of the country was congenial with the temper of its inhabitants, and their eyes were familiarised to rapid streams, craggy mountains, venerable forests, and fertile vales. Romantic objects, presented to them on all sides, waked the enthusiasm of the mind, and charmed the imagination. Greece, indeed, exhibited a most extraordinary scene; for at a period, when all surrounding nations were obscured by intellectual darkness, and were barbarous and unpolished, her sons unfolded the full powers of their transcendent genius. The active intellect, not enervated by the luxuries of refinement, nor distracted by a multiplicity of objects, exerted itself with ardour, followed up many of its inventions with perseverance, and soared to the most astonishing heights of the beautiful and the sublime. To other countries they were doubtless indebted for some rude and imperfect essays of art, science, and philosophy; but it was their peculiar glory to shape them into beauty, and methodise them into system.

HOMER, the great Father of Epic song, first invoked the muses, charmed the ear with the matchless harmony of his numbers, and presented in his incomparable works the most striking pictures of ancient manners, the nicest discriminations of character, and the most beautiful prospects of nature.\* To the invention

\* B. C. 907. For a glowing passage on the genius of Homer, the source of the beauties of the tragedy, painting, eloquence, and sculpture of Greece, see Anacharsis, vol. i, p. 105.

of a poet he unites the feelings of a philanthropist. He celebrates the arts which sustain and adorn human life, and breathes the most lively sentiments of piety, patriotism, and social affection. As he describes those miseries of man which spring from dishonour, discord, and war, there is an air of deep solemnity diffused over his poems; and in this respect, as well as in his picture of primeval manners, there is a close affinity to the books of the Old Testament. His genius, like the Jupiter he describes, is supreme in majesty when compared with that of all other poets, and is never exerted in a manner which harmonizes so perfectly with its powers, as when he soars to the sublime. Among the numerous circumstances which may be related to his praise, it is surely not the least extraordinary, that the beauty and contrivance of his fables, the harmony of his numbers, and the various exertions of his genius, elevated at once by *one mighty effort* the dignity of epic poetry to such a pitch of perfection, that almost all the merit of succeeding poets has consisted in following, without being able to overtake him.

The tragic muse gradually improved her charms, gained the full dignity of her character, and spoke the genuine language of the passions. She animated the Greeks with that original spirit of dramatic excellence, which the Romans, however fond of theatrical exhibitions, found to be unattainable.

She first enlivened the scenes of *ÆSCHYLUS* with wild sublimity, (B. C. 485.) gave beauty and grace to the polished and energetic *SOPHOCLES*, and taught *EURIPIDES* to breathe his pathetic and moral strains. B. C. 433. Comedy amused the Athenians in its ruder state with the coarse licentiousness and broad humour of *ARISTOPHANES*, and in its more pleasing and elegant

garb, charmed them with the chaste sentiment and diversified characters of MENANDER. B. C. 320. To this admired writer, the greatest ornament of the new comedy, are ascribed no less than 105 plays. Only the titles of 73, and some short fragments, have escaped the ravages of time. The style of these precious relics is pure and elegant, and the turn of thought is serious and severe. Of the vivacity of his comic powers, the artifice of his plots, or the excellence of his characters, we can form no juster idea than from the imitations of Terence. Such was the high estimation in which Quintilian held his productions, as to assert that he esteemed them sufficient to form the character of an orator, and that Menander had eclipsed all other comic writers by the dazzling splendour of his genius. Quint. lib. x, c. i.

Of the sublime flights of PINDAR, the celebrated bard of Thebes, we can only judge by his few remaining *Odes*, which are said to be far inferior to his *Hymns* unfortunately lost. He celebrates the victors in the sacred games of Greece, particularly Hiero of Syracuse and Theron of Agrigentum, and rehearses the praises of the cities from whence they sprang. His diction is strong, his images bold, various, and vivid, his transitions rapid, and his numbers irregular. Modern imitations of his manner, except a few by Horace, Dryden, and Gray, are tame and spiritless; and are no more to be compared to his grandeur of thought, and truly poetical fire, than pictures of the eruption of *Ætna*, which is a favourite subject of his description, are to the *real* appearance of that mountain.

“Forth from whose nitrous caverns issuing rise  
Pure liquid fountains of tempestuous fire,

And veil in ruddy mists the noon-day skies ;  
 While wrapt in smoke the eddying flames aspire,  
 Or gleaming through the night with hideous roar,  
 Far o'er the reddening main huge rocky fragments pour."

WEST'S PYNDAR.

At a much later period THEOCRITUS described the rural manners and romantic scenes of Sicily, in his *Pastorals*, which like the roses glittering with the dew-drops of the morning, are fresh from the hand of nature, and ever attract us with the charms of originality.

Among the various branches of composition, an early attention was paid to history. HERODOTUS recorded the affairs of the ancient world, as well as some of the most glorious proofs of Grecian valour, in an easy and unaffected narrative;\* and a model of authentic and accurate detail was given to mankind by the grave and impartial THUCYDIDES. Through his obscurity a certain brightness sometimes appears, which like the flashes of lightning in a dark night, breaks forth, and dazzles his readers. The divine Socrates allured his countrymen to virtue by the charms of familiar conversation, and brought the most useful kind of knowledge from the schools of philosophy to reform the manners of his countrymen. His labours to turn their attention from abstruse and frivolous speculations (founded upon the erroneous principles of Aristotle) to the amendment of their conduct, form a

\* For a general account of the Greek historians, see Rollin's *Arts and Sciences*, vol. iii, p. 30.

Monboddo, in vol. iv, b. ii, c. 10, of his *Origin and Progress of Language*, has given a very excellent account of the style, history, and character of Herodotus. See likewise Warton on Pope, vol. ii, p. 385. and Athenian Letters, vol. i, p. 151.

curious epoch in the history of the human mind.\* To two of his most enlightened disciples we are indebted for the interesting detail of his conversations, sentiments, and actions. Their respective defences orapologies support the dignity of their injured master's character, are strongly marked by the peculiar disposition of the writers, and coincide in the principal topics of vindication. PLATO, who united the fancy of the poet with the wisdom of the moralist and the subtlety of the metaphysician, adorned the lessons of philosophy with the luxuriant flowers of fancy, and applied his ardent and deep speculations to trace the great author of the universe through the display of his works, and to prove the immortal nature of the soul. B. C. 400. XENOPHON the scholar, the warrior, and the sage, among other excellent productions, recorded the retreat of himself and his brave countrymen, through hosts of barbarous foes, in a circumstantial and animated narrative; and, combining the beauties of fiction with the traditions of history, portrayed in the elder Cyrus the character of an accomplished monarch. All his works are interspersed with the most engaging sentiments of morality, and charm with the matchless grace of genuine simplicity. Harris's *Hermes*, p. 423. ARISTOTLE the most eminent scholar of Plato, did not embrace the sublime opinions of his great master upon divine subjects, nor copy his florid style of writing. B. C. 345. His various works are remarkable for a simplicity and a severity of composition. Authoritative and profound in all his opinions, he car-

\* For an excellent account of the philosophy of Socrates, see Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacre*, part ii, p. 46. Gillies, vol. i, p. 76, and vol. ii, p. 94.



ried his indefatigable researches not only into natural, political, and moral subjects, but investigated the principles of elegant literature, and applied his judgment to the critical examination of the various branches of poetry and eloquence. As a logician he reigned with despotic sway over the schools of Europe for many ages, but by a revolution, common to human opinions, many of his works, in the present times, are more admired than studied.\*

The liberty of Greece gave free scope to the efforts of public speakers. The Athenians were gratified with listening to the speeches of the artful Lysias, the bold Demades, the polite and empassioned Hyperides, the severe Lycurgus, and the diffuse and learned Æschines. But the palm of eloquence, thus contended for by his countrymen, is justly assigned to the celebrated author of the *Philippics*. Severe and majestic energy is the characteristic of the sentiments and language of DEMOSTHENES. He was too serious and too dignified to aim at the ornaments of style, except such as were manly and appropriate; he was too ardent to be diffuse, and too eager for action to waste his time upon the circuitous arts of mild persuasion. It was his great object to astonish by unexpected flashes of thought, to terrify by lively images of danger, and to convince by the most impressive, and most conclusive arguments. While he roused his slothful and procrastinating countrymen to check the advances and revenge the aggressions of Philip of Macedon, who was both a crafty and power-

\* The logic and physics of Aristotle kept mankind in ignorance of true philosophy, for two thousand years, and were at last exploded by that great benefactor of mankind, lord Bacon. See Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth, vol. i. Editor.

ful enemy, his orations equally proved the degeneracy of their manners, and the sublimity of his own genius. And what must have been the commanding power of his *delivery*, to which even Æschines, his great and able rival, according to his own candid acknowledgment, could not do justice! The energy of his manner, the modulation of his voice, and dignity of his action, corresponded with the force and the compass of his reasoning, and combined to form the orator, to whom is deservedly assigned the foremost place in the records of eloquence.\*

To the Greeks we owe the improvement, if not the invention of grammar, logic, criticism, metaphysics, music, geometry, medicine, and astronomy; and many of the terms peculiar to each of these arts and sciences, clearly point out the country from which we have derived them. The refined invention of builders embellished their cities with those regular, well proportioned, and elegant specimens of architecture, which displayed the various forms of the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian orders. Athens was filled with

\* The Roman orator is too florid and rhetorical, his figures are too striking and palpable, the divisions of his discourse are drawn chiefly from the rules of the schools. The manner of Demosthenes is more chaste than that of Cicero. Could it be copied, its success would be infallible over a modern assembly. It is rapid harmony exactly adjusted to the sense: it is vehement reasoning, without any appearance of art: it is disdain, boldness, anger, and freedom, involved in a continued stream of argument: and of all human productions the orations of Demosthenes present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection." Hume's *Essays*, vol. i, p. 109. *Travels of Anacharsis*, vol. ii, p. 116. The character of his genius, vol. v, p. 184. Leland's Preface to his Translation of Demosthenes, 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Philippic, and 1st, 2d, and 3d, Olynthiac Orations.

temples, theatres, porticos, and vestibulés, of matchless symmetry and grandeur; and the pencils of Zeuxis, Parrhasius, and Polygnotus, and the chisels of Alcamenes, Phideas, and Polycletus, decorated them with the most beautiful pictures, busts, and statues. The religion of the Greeks was peculiarly favourable to the exertions of artists, and their sacrifices, assemblies, and processions, were equally well adapted to painting, bas-relief, and sculpture. These artists animated the Parian marble, and gave life and passion to the glowing canvass. The continual view of the human body in the baths, and at the public games, familiarised the artists to the contemplation of forms the most elegant, and attitudes the most graceful. They copied the fairest appearances of nature, and by combining the scattered beauties of various persons in one subject, gave no very inadequate representation of that ideal excellence, which filled their glowing imaginations. Theirs likewise was that exquisite judgment, the companion of genius, which instantly selecting from art or nature whatever was excellent, gave to their works an irresistible charm. Such indeed was the diffusion of taste, that even the common people, by constantly surveying the finest specimens of painting and sculpture, and hearing the most finished compositions recited in the theatres and public assemblies, became qualified to appreciate, with correct judgment, the various productions of their countrymen.

*See also the notes on the preceding page.*

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

**AFTER** such a digression as the foregoing, which it may be presumed, can require no apology, as the arts and literature of the Greeks, in their meridian glory, are the subjects of it; we unite the broken thread of history by remarking, that the memorable war of Peloponnesus derived its origin from the ambition of the Athenians, who were desirous of humbling the pride of Sparta, and making their own city the centre of Grecian dominion. (B. C. 431.) As the Athenians possessed only a territory of 86 square leagues, while that of the Spartans consisted of 250, they were compelled to make the most vigorous exertions to counterbalance, by every means, the superior resources of their rivals. To the disgrace of a people so refined and civilized, this war was carried on with all the ferocity of barbarians, and presented a wide scene of calamity and distress, of cabal and civil discord, of misconduct and cruelty. Athens was desolated by a pestilential fever, far more destructive than the sword of the enemy; yet it tended not to fix the volatile temper of her citizens upon any measures of peace\*. The capricious Alcibiades held forth the pos-

\* De Pauw, vol. i, p. 115. Thucydides, lib. ii, chap. 47, 48, &c. Edit. Bipont. tom. ii, p. 71.

session of Sicily as a desirable object of conquest. To achieve this enterprise the most splendid and powerful fleet that ever left the harbour of Athens sailed for the bay of Syracuse under his command. (Thucydides, lib. vi, chap. 19, 20, 22.) Becoming a prey to the intrigues of faction, he abandoned the expedition, and by flight shunned the fate to which he was sentenced. By his advice the Spartans reinforced the Syracusians, and the storm of their united vengeance fell upon the Athenians: not a single ship returned home, and a few only of the great numbers, who composed their army and navy, escaped death or captivity. For a striking detail of these events we are indebted to Thucydides, who, holding the rank of a commander in the early part of the war, was himself an eye-witness of many of the transactions which he has related. To his nervous description of facts he has added what may be esteemed no imperfect specimens of the abilities displayed by the greatest orators of his time, and particularly by Pericles, when he pronounced a funeral oration upon the soldiers who had fallen in the service of their country. Thucydides, lib. i, c. 22, lib. ii, c. 35.

The irresistible force of thunder, and the vivid flashes of lightning, were the figurative allusions used to convey ideas of the eloquence of Pericles. His talents raised him to the sole administration of public affairs, and he guided at his sovereign disposal a capricious populace for fifteen years. (B. C. 430.) To the people he looked for distinctions and honours, and to them he sacrificed the principles of the ancient constitution. The engine of his popularity was corruption. With the public money, originally destined for the defence of Attica in case of invasion, he rewarded his countrymen for attending the public assemblies,

and enabled every one of them, by the sanction of an express law, to receive a gratuity for resorting to their favourite diversions of the theatre. His fame would rest upon a very weak foundation, if it was only supported by the success of his administration, in bending the inclinations of his citizens to his own political plans, and sacrificing their independence to his ambition.

But fortunately for his reputation he has the testimony of the most unbiassed men in his favour; for from the high encomium of Socrates, the anecdotes of Plutarch, and the candid and honourable testimony of Thucydides, who was banished at his instigation, we may justly conclude that he was the patron of the arts; that as a public speaker he was most eloquent; that as a statesman his abilities were consummate; and that in the midst of the cruelty and venality of his countrymen he disdained the acquisition of wealth, and abhorred the practice of revenge.

Twenty-seven years put a period to the war of Peloponnesus, and extinguished the glory of the Athenians. The burning of their fleet, and the demolition of those walls of the city, the expense of which had been defrayed by the spoils and treasures of the Persians, attested the triumph of Lysander, the ambitious, but uncorrupt general of the Spartans. Thrasybulus, with a small band of friends, effected the expulsion of the thirty tyrants, and received an olive crown as the sole reward of this heroic action. Cimon vindicated the honour of his disgraced country, and, after a signal defeat of the Lacedemonian navy, re-established its ancient government. While Athens was again rising to glory and distinction, the Thebans, under the conduct of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, whose social virtues and mili-

tary talents did equal honour to their illustrious characters, checked the power of Sparta; and the battle of Leuctra rewarded their valour with complete success. But the sun of Theban greatness set at the battle of Mantinea, where Epaminondas expired in the arms of victory.\* Nor did Athens long enjoy the revival of her power; for Philip of Macedon, equally distinguished by the profligacy of his conduct, and the greatness of his ambition, obtained the sovereignty of Greece, no less by intrigues and corruption, than by his prowess in the field. The victory of Chæronæa extinguished the independence of the Grecian states, and the succeeding events laid the foundation of a new empire. B. C. 338.

The most remarkable changes by slow degrees took place in the manners of the Athenians, and prepared the way for the introduction of the Macedonian, and afterwards of the Roman power. When, as Xenophon remarked, it was customary to adorn the feasts of Attica with the costly viands of Sicily and Asia Minor, the luxury of repasts became fatal to the manners of the people. Private extravagance kept pace with public profusion; instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare, recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the dainties of distant coasts, which were served up with all the refinements of culinary art. In summer, the delicious wines of Cyprus were cooled with snow; and in winter, garlands of flowers, procured at great

\* A fine sketch of the character of Epaminondas is given in the Travels of Anacharsis, v. ii, p. 80. And one not less appropriate occurs in Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, b. iii, p. 127. Cicero preferred him to all the Grecian heroes—"Epaminondas princeps meo iudicio Græciz."

expense, adorned the tables, and encircled the heads of this luxuriant people. The martial songs of their ancestors became unfashionable; and parasites, dancers, and buffoons, crowded their sumptuous feasts. An excessive fondness for horses, and the pursuits of the chase exhausted the finances of the youths, who were vitiated by their intercourse with harlots, or corrupted by the licentious philosophy of sophists. Disdaining to cultivate the virtues of their progenitors, and blind to the encroachments of politic and enterprising enemies, they gave a loose to luxury, and licentiousness. The public revenues, which had been formerly expended in the equipment of fleets and armies, were lavished upon theatrical exhibitions, games, and festivals. Frivolous curiosity and tame irresolution became the characteristics of a people, whom no sense of danger or shame could rouse to martial exertions, even when their enemies were stripping them of their most valuable territories, and advancing with rapid steps to Athens itself.

The death of Philip (B. C. 335) induced the Athenians to throw off the Macedonian yoke. The alacrity of his renowned successor was soon displayed in subduing, and his clemency in pardoning, their defection. The exploits of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, who undertook his expedition against Darius with a view to avenge the wrongs of Greece, form an interesting portion of this period of history. Although the Greeks were deprived during his reign of their independence, yet they were left at full liberty to follow the dictates of their own inclinations, with respect to the cultivation of the arts, and even in martial affairs they shared the triumphs of the conqueror of the East.

This great and accomplished Hero was himself distinguished by a love of the arts and of literature: he



patronized Lysippus the most eminent statuary, and Appelles the greatest painter of his age; and he preserved as his most invaluable treasure, a copy of his favourite Homer, in a rich casket found among the spoils of Darius. To the most extraordinary talents he united an ardent and uncontrollable temper, headstrong passions, and an unquenchable thirst for dominion. Although his conduct was tarnished with some atrocious sallies of rage and cruelty, yet enlightened by the precepts of Aristotle, to whose care his father Philip entrusted the important charge of his education, after paying that eminent philosopher the most distinguishing compliment a tutor ever received, he improved his extensive conquests to the general benefit of mankind. He built many cities in the most convenient situations, and introduced the civilization of Greece into barbarous countries. His life exhibited many splendid examples of clemency, humanity, and generosity, even amid the fervour of youth, and the impetuosity of victory. His race of glory was indeed short; but he outstripped all his competitors in his enterprises, as well as in his success. Even after making full allowances for the fictions and exaggerations of his flattering historians, the most authentic accounts of his life are sufficient to prove, if we recollect the brilliancy of his wit, his personal strength and courage, his talents for war, the vast elevation of his mind, and the extent of his rapid conquests, that he was one of the most extraordinary personages, whose history stands recorded in the annals of the world.\*

\* For a fine character of Alexander the Great, which confirms the propriety of my statement, see Montesquieu, lib. x, c. 14.

Some time after his death the Athenians solicited the protection of the Romans to shelter them from the oppression of Philip, the second of that name, King of Macedon. (B. C. 190) Governed in appearance by their own laws and magistrates, they were obliged to show the most obsequious attention to their protectors, in order to avoid being considered as the ungrateful abettors of rebellion and tumult. The decisions for war or peace, the exactions of taxes, and all political regulations, were no longer left to their determination, but depended upon the decrees of the Roman senate. The spirit of the people however was bent to obedience; and that submission to foreign command, which in the days of Miltiades, or a Cimon, would have been regarded as worse than death, was considered by the contemporaries of Polybius as an easy, and even a gratifying homage. Greece could however still claim the glorious superiority of being the mistress of the arts, and of teaching them to the unpolished conquerors of the world. The Romans were gradually refined by the people they had subdued; and the captive Greeks introduced taste, elegance, and literature among the rough warriors of Latium.

In the time of the civil wars of Rome, the Athenians, actuated by their ancient love of liberty, espoused the cause of Pompey, and afterwards of Brutus and Cassius; and they erected statues of these illustrious patriots near those of Harmodius and Aristogiton, who had slain the tyrant Hipparchus. Unfortunate upon both occasions in the part they took, they experienced the clemency both of Julius and of Augustus Cæsar. Athens was long celebrated as the abode of philosophy, and the seat of learning. Here Horace completed his education, and to this place the

great Roman Orator sent his son to be instructed by Cratippus; and here likewise Pomponius, his accomplished and virtuous friend, from his residence in the country, and his proficiency in its literature, obtained the honourable appellation of *Atticus*.

That this place continued to be the seat of philosophy at a subsequent period, we learn from the eloquent address of St. Paul, so well adapted to the favourite pursuits and opinions of its inhabitants. (Acts xviii. Demosthenis Philip. i.) And that their superstitious disposition still remained, was evident from their dedication of an altar to the "Unknown God." They were influenced by the same eager pursuit of novelty, which had marked their character in the time of Demosthenes; and their taste for the works of the poets was still flourishing and correct. Under the mild empire of Trajan, (A. C. 114.) they retained their fondness for the precious monuments of sculpture, as Pliny mentions, that in his time Athens was adorned with no less than three thousand statues. They found in Adrian a generous benefactor; he bestowed upon them new privileges; and the city under his auspicious influence reflected a faint ray of her former glory. It long continued to be the favourite abode of philosophers; and when Synesius of Alexandria, an elegant writer of the fifth century, visited it, he remarked, that the celebrated colonade or porch from which the Stoic philosophers had taken their name, had been stripped of its elegant pictures, and was deserted by the followers of Zeno.

Alaric, the savage plunderer of Italy, extended his conquests to Greece, and marked his steps by ruin and devastation. (A. C. 410.) He passed the straits of *Thermopylæ*, from which the Greeks, unmindful, or

perhaps ignorant of the disaster of Xerxes, and the glory of Leonidas, retired as he advanced. As soon as the voice of his herald was heard at Athens, the descendants of those heroes who had conquered at Marathon and Salamis opened their gates. What other proof need be mentioned of the degeneracy of the times? In the fourteenth century Greece yielded to the victorious arms of Mahomet the second, and continues in the possession of the Turks to this day.

#### I. THE PRESENT STATE OF GREECE.

The ravages of successive conquerors have assisted the slow but certain hand of time in hastening the destruction of ancient Athens. Ever since the Turks have had the country in their possession, they have exerted a wanton industry, and shown the natural hostility of ignorance to taste, by mutilating statues, demolishing temples, and defacing the elegant forms of sculpture. The curious traveller, however, has still sufficient scope for the indulgence of his pleasing melancholy, and for giving way to those mixed sensations of sorrow and delight, for which no language can supply an adequate name. Such are his feelings when his imagination presents to him the Genius of ancient Greece, bound in the iron fetters of despotism, reclining his head amidst broken walls and prostrate columns, while liberty, the muses, and the arts, are speeding their flight from these unhappy regions. On an actual survey of the ruins of Athens, the traveller may be surprised that the sight of such objects did not open the eyes of the barbarian conquerors to admire the enchanting beauties of architecture. Every colonnade, portico, and pillar he beholds, nay, every step he takes

cannot fail to carry back his fancy, without any violent effort to distant periods, and lead him to combine remote events with present appearances. On the abrupt and craggy rock of the Acropolis was erected the magnificent temple of Minerva, famed for the golden statue, which was one of the choicest productions of Phidias. It is now imperfectly represented only by huge masses of marble. From this spot may be distinctly seen, when the sun gilds the horizon with his evening rays, the white column erected to Theseus after the battle of Salamis. The Piræus, the renowned port of Athens, to which the triumphant fleet of Themistocles returned laden with the spoils of the Persians is now distinguished only by the traces of a small theatre, and a monastery of mean architecture. The ruins of temples and theatres, intermixed with flat-roofed cottages, and marble tablets inscribed with characters, which neither the ignorant Turks nor the modern Greeks can decipher, are melancholy memorials of a more noble and a more refined people. The marble fragments found among the ruins of the schools attest the diligence of the ancient philosophers, who inscribed upon them the names of their scholars. The odeum of Pericles, which once resounded with the notes of the lyre, and the sublime strains of the choral song, can at present be traced only by its lofty and broken wall, and is deformed by the rude outwork of a Turkish castle. (Chandler's Travels, p. 78, 85, &c.) The shores of Attica are waste and desolate; few villages are to be seen from Eleusis to the promontory of Sunium, and thence even to the plains of Marathon. The eye of the inquisitive traveller discerns nothing but scattered ruins along a coast of eighty miles in extent. Nature herself seems, in some respects, to sympathize

with the gloomy desolation of the place; for the once full and flowing Ilissus, on whose margin Socrates reclined to converse with his disciple Phedrus, is now almost dried up, and its banks, once shaded with lofty and waving planes, are bare and unfruitful.

Every man of classical taste feels a melancholy pleasure in forming this contrast, which he is enabled to make in consequence of the diligent researches of Wheeler, Spon, and Chandler. But he may receive a more lively satisfaction from the researches of Stuart, who from fragments of buildings and broken pillars has traced such plans and elevations of the original buildings, and explained them so clearly in his three splendid and costly volumes, as to give a very expressive representation of the city in its ancient state of elegance and grandeur.

However the inhabitants of Athens are depressed by their haughty tyrants, they still retain marks of their original character. They possess much of that quickness of apprehension, vivacity of temper, and urbanity of manners, which distinguished their ancestors\*. The native character of the people long continues like the peculiarity of the soil, which is the same as it was of old; Attica is still famed for olives, grapes, and figs; and the neighbouring slopes of Hymettus still abound with bees, which produce most delicious honey. But a long state of servitude and superstition has degraded the native powers of their minds; and the recollection or the fear of blows and indignities too often inflicted by their tyrants, makes them stoop to the artifices of cun-

\* Eaton's Survey, p. 334, &c. Chandler, p. 117, 120. Stuart's Athens. "Ils ont une politesse d'esprit naturelle, et beaucoup d'adresse dans toutes les affaires qu'ils entreprennent." Spon, vol. ii, p. 76, 92. Wheeler, p. 356.

ning and dissimulation. The Albanians, a hardy and courageous race, who keep flocks upon the purple declivities of Hymettus and Citheron, or gather olives on the green banks of the Cephissus, are descended from the Spartans. Their patience of fatigue, and their desperate bravery, which has been sometimes roused by extreme oppression, prove the justness of their pretensions to such an origin. When we observe that the sparks of original genius and courage are still extant among this people, it must excite a wish, that captives so undeserving and unfortunate could be assisted to break their chains. Far from being admitted to any privileges whatever, which can bring them upon an equality with their masters, they are kept in the most abject servitude, and continue in the same miserable state as when they were first conquered. They retain the same rights they ever had to shake off the Turkish yoke, and to assert their claims to independence. The frequent wars between the Russians and the Turks might afford them the glorious opportunity of emancipation; and no enterprise could be more worthy of the emperor who now fills the throne of Russia, than to assist their courageous efforts in a manner more vigorous and effectual, than was done in the late war between Catherine the Great and the Turks. The fate of the brave inhabitants of Poland extinguishes the hope of restoration to complete independence from that quarter: but the government of Petersburg would doubtless be more tolerable than that of the Porte, if we consider the different spirit of its religious creed, and its more advanced state of civilization. If the modern Greeks could be placed in so advantageous a situation, the prediction of Peter the Great might be verified; and the arts, which have civilized northern

Europe, might return, after having taken an extensive circuit, to enlighten and adorn the country of their birth.

“ I cannot better compare the transmigration of science than to the circulation of blood in the human body; and I foresee that they will one time or other forsake England, France, and Germany, and settle among us for many ages, to return again into Greece, their first abode\*.”

When we recal the days of Grecian glory, during which the arts of peace and war rose to the greatest height, when patriots, statesmen, philosophers, poets, and artists, were so eminently distinguished for virtue, wisdom and elegance, we cannot help indulging a wish, that the inhabitants of the same delightful and interesting regions could be allowed to give full scope to their original genius, and that the descendants of an Aristides, an Agesilaus, a Socrates, and a Leonidas, could not only be permitted to enjoy the inheritance of their illustrious ancestors, without extortion and without slavery, but be encouraged to emulate their fame.

For the assistance of the memory in chronological arrangements, we may distinguish the remarkable periods of Grecian history by *four* memorable epochs. The first is the age of *Solon*, or the establishment of the laws, B. C. 594; the second is the age of *Aristides*, or of martial glory, B. C. 480; the third of *Pericles*, or of luxury and the arts, B. C. 430; and the fourth that of *Mahomet II*, or complete degradation, A. C. 1453.

Enough may be collected from the foregoing detail to ascertain “that the commonwealths of Greece, while they maintained their liberty, were the most heroic

\* From the Speech of the Czar Peter, *Memoirs of Literature*, vol. I, p. 361.



confederacy that ever existed. They were the politest, the bravest, and the wisest of men. In the short space of a little more than a century, they became such statesmen, warriors, orators, historians, physicians, poets, critics, painters, sculptors, architects, and last of all philosophers, that one can hardly help considering that *golden period* as a providential event in honour of human nature, to show to what perfection the species might ascend." Harris's *Hermes*.

On looking back to those times, when the Greeks carried their various inventions and improvements to such perfection, we cannot fail to acknowledge the obligations, which ancient Rome and modern Europe have been under to them. Greece has been the instructress of the civilized world. To her indeed all polished nations are deeply indebted for holding out the light of genius, philosophy, and taste, to guide their steps in the cultivation of the moral and intellectual powers of the mind.

Emulation was the great incentive to exertion in every branch of art, and every scene of action. All attempts were carried to the utmost pitch of attainable perfection. The trophies of Miltiades did not suffer Themistocles to sleep; and the applause bestowed upon Herodotus at the Olympic games stimulated Thucydides to compose his immortal work. The efforts of genius are not confined to servile imitation, for genius may strike into innumerable paths. The Greeks have shown us that excellence even of the highest order is attainable; and it remains for us, if we possess any capacity, if we are animated by ambition, and impelled by a spirit of enterprise like theirs, to make repeated and unremitting exertions, until our endeavours terminate as theirs have done, in new and useful discoveries

and improvements in the various branches of art, science, and literature.

The history we have been considering cannot fail to suggest to the English reader various points of resemblance to the state and circumstances of his own country. The struggles for power, and the intrigues of parties and popular leaders, the ardent love of liberty, and high pretensions to domination, occasionally sinking into subserviency, and then again rising from tame acquiescence to new claims, new jealousies, the most active exertions of power, and the most strenuous vindication of rights; the tendencies of the state to great accession of empire, and the obstacles to a continuance of distant and widely spread dominion; the gradual increase of power and opulence from sources of commerce; the consequent spirit of dissipation, and prevalence of luxury, tending to dissolve the very strength and prosperity they gave birth to; these circumstances, connected with the political career of a free government, and the civil concerns of a commercial and maritime country, are no where more fully displayed than in the history of the republic of Athens.

The closer and more exact resemblance between *Attica* and *Great Britain* is discernible in our diligent cultivation of the arts and sciences, in the eloquence of our public speakers, the bravery of our sailors, and the skill and valour of our admirals and generals. While we are eager to establish this resemblance, so flattering to our national pride; and whilst our Island reflects the image of the literature, architecture, sculpture, and taste, which so eminently distinguished the Greeks; and we surpass them in navigation, commerce, science, and philosophy; let us be extremely

careful that our characters and manners have no mixture of the factious spirit, levity, corruption, and degeneracy, which marked the decline of their glory; but that we emulate the virtue, valour, patriotism, and refinement of their **GREATEST MEN, AND PUREST TIMES.**

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE HISTORY OF ROME.

**WITH** respect to the eminent character and the political importance of the Romans, their history is more splendid than that of any other country. Like the sculptured column of Trajan, it is a monument of triumphs. It is more uniform than that of Greece, displays greater vicissitudes of affairs, and records the lives of an equal, if not a greater number of illustrious warriors and statesmen. The Romans established their empire not so much by the smiles of fortune, as by the persevering efforts of wisdom and valour. They were extraordinary both in the nobleness and in the debasement of their character; for in their progress to dominion, they exercised virtues which far exceeded, and in the decline of their empire, they were disgraced with vices which fell much below the common standard of human nature.

The prospect of Rome, at the period of its greatest power, cannot fail to impress our minds with astonishment. At the time when the virtuous and warlike **TRAJAN** filled the imperial throne, the Romans had reached the summit of dominion and magnificence. The metropolis of the empire and its suburbs extending beyond the seven celebrated hills, were bounded by a circumference of fifty miles. More populous than Babylon, Nineveh, or Thebes, or any capital of modern

Europe, the number of its inhabitants amounted to twelve hundred thousand.\* It abounded with mansions remarkable for height and spaciousness ; it was interspersed with gardens and groves, and was decorated with every edifice, which could contribute either to the use or ornament of individuals, or of the public. Fountains, baths, aqueducts, bridges, markets, obelisks, squares, courts of justice, porticos, palaces, amphitheatres, and temples, filled the august prospect. The temple of Ops was enriched with the gold of subdued monarchs ; the rostra were decked with the naval spoils of a long succession of ages ; and upon the lofty arches were described in the most exquisite sculpture, the various victories and splendid triumphs of the conquerors of the world. Among the public buildings were more particularly observed by the astonished spectator, the elegant forum of Trajan, the ample theatres of Marcellus and Pompey, the temple of Neptune, the wide circumference of the Circus Maximus, the Capitol rearing its majestic structures above the Tarpeian Rock ; the imperial Palace, from the magnificent portico of which the Emperor could overlook the whole city ; the temple of Apollo, distinguished by the colossal statue of that deity, erected upon the Palatine Hill in the centre of the city ; and the dome of the sublime Pantheon, eminent for its incomparable symmetry, and regular proportions. All these buildings

\* Upon the subject of the extent and the population of Rome there is an excellent note in Brotier's Tacitus, vol. ii, p. 473, 4to. edit. He states at large the data, upon which his calculation of the inhabitants proceeds. There is a curious dissertation upon this subject in the *Memoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, tom. xxx, p. 191, by D'Anville. The only capital in the known world more populous than ancient Rome is Pekin in China, which *Du Halde* reckons at three millions.

presented the solid style of the Tuscan, or the more elegant orders of Grecian architecture, and were adorned with the most beautiful productions of painting and sculpture. Above these stately edifices arose a lofty pillar of white marble, exhibiting, in the most lively images of sculpture, the Dacian victories of Trajan, whose colossal figure crowned the summit. The extent, the variety, and the grandeur of these buildings proved, that this city was the residence of the masters of the world; as the ingenuity, the productions, the arts, and the riches of all countries conspired to aggrandize and embellish it.

Twenty thousand select troops, either distinguished as regular patrols, or prætorian cohorts, watched both night and day over the security of this populous and spacious city. To this seat of supreme power ambassadors were sent from the most remote regions, to lay the diadems of Kings at the feet of the Emperor. From hence marched the proconsuls, lieutenants, and prætors, surrounded by numerous trains of attendants, and escorted by cohorts of foot and squadrons of horse, to take the command of their respective provinces. They travelled over straight and spacious roads, which intersected the empire in every direction, and which were so solid and durable as to remain in many places unimpaired by the ravages of time, after the lapse of more than seventeen centuries.\* The ready communication between one province and another was equally secured by sea and by land; and the fleets, which anchored in the port of Ostia, were prepared to carry the imperial arms to the most distant coasts. Upon the banks of great rivers, such as the Rhine, the Danube,

\* Campbell's Political Survey, vol. ii, p. 250. Gibbon vol. i, p. 51. Lumisden, p. 86. Horsley's *Britannia Romana*, p. 520.

and the Po, in the vicinity of populous cities, or on the frontiers of hostile nations, were stationed the camps of the legions. At the first alarm of insurrection they were ready to take the field; no plot of the enemy could escape their vigilance, and no force was sufficient to repel their formidable onset. Many of the temperate and fertile countries, which now compose the most powerful kingdoms of Europe, were enrolled in the register of tributary states. The imperial eagle stretched her wings over the fairest portions of the ancient world. The empire was extended more than two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus in Britain, and the northern limits of Dacia, to Mount Atlas in the west of Africa, and reached in length more than three thousand miles, from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was supposed to contain above sixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well-cultivated land. It included Spain and Portugal, Gaul and Britain, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Transylvania, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, the provinces of Asia Minor, Pontus, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, Egypt, Mauritania, and Dacia. Most of these countries abounded with large and opulent cities, every one of which attested the progress and influence of the arts, as well as the dominion of the Romans, by the grandeur and variety of its public works. The population of the empire was equal to its extent, as it was reputed to contain not less than one hundred and twenty millions of subjects, a number far greater than was ever, either before or after that period, united under one European government.

If we consider the Modern World with reference to the Roman empire, even the dominions of the great

Mogul, or the more extensive territories of the Grand Signior, far as they are spread in Europe, Asia, and Africa, sink in comparison with it. Russia in point of comparative population is a desert; and China, with its myriads of inhabitants, with respect to martial energy, is a nation of effeminate slaves.

Such is the sublime prospect of the metropolis, the naval and military force, and the extensive and formidable sovereignty of ancient Rome in the meridian of her glory. A survey so remarkable for the variety and the splendour of its objects, is the most distinguished, which history has presented to the contemplation of man. It will appear the more extraordinary, if we contrast the empire so extensive and flourishing under Trajan, with its parent state, consisting of a small colony of shepherds and adventurers, originally planted by Romulus upon the banks of the Tiber, and forming one of forty-seven independent cantons, which altogether occupied a space of only fifty miles. B. C. 753. Ferguson's Roman Republic, c. i.

By comparing the most exalted state of Rome with its origin, we are naturally led to inquire into the causes of its grandeur. From considering its fall from such an elevation of power, when the imperial city was taken by the Goths, we are naturally led to investigate the causes of its decline. These inquiries will form the subjects of this and the following chapter.

The leading causes of the greatness of the Roman power may be resolved,

- I. Into the peculiar constitution of the government.
- II. The rigid cultivation of the arts of war.
- III. The strong attachment to religion.
- IV. The active spirit of patriotism.



These causes operating upon the opinions and determining the conduct of a hardy, active, and courageous people, conspired to raise them to the summit of empire.

I. If the Romans had submitted without reluctance to the tyranny of Tarquinius Superbus, and the outrages committed by his family, their spirit would have been completely broken, and their city would probably have remained without distinction among the small states of Italy. The senate suffered Tarquin to assume the royal authority, without the ceremonies of a legal election, or the usual approbation of the people. Repeated sufferings, however, opened their eyes to the horrors of despotism; they drove the tyrant from his throne, and adopted a consular form of government. From the moment that Brutus raised the dagger, streaming with the blood of Lucretia, and vowed the expulsion of Tarquin, the Romans were destined to be the conquerors of the world. B. C. 509. Liv. lib. i, sect. 59.

We need not, therefore, trace the government to a more remote period, than to the abolition of regal power. From that era the real character of the people began to be developed, and a new spring was given to their general exertions. They felt the necessity of governors, laws, and discipline; but of such governors, laws, and discipline, as were favourable to the growth of their darling passions, the love of freedom, independence, and dominion.

The executive and legislative branches of their *Constitution* consisted of the consuls, the senate, and the assembly of the people. The *Consuls* were at once the prime ministers of the republic, and the generals of the armies. They presided over the senate, and

convened and dismissed it at pleasure. The *Senate* was a deliberative council of state, varying in numbers at different periods of time. This august and venerable body was composed of men of fortune, whose characters were exemplary, and their extraction noble. To obtain the dignity of a senator it was necessary to pass through a regular gradation of important offices. They were the guardians of religion, they appointed the proconsuls to the command of provinces, had the disposal of the public treasures, and in times of alarm and danger could appoint dictators, and invest the consuls with absolute power.

To the *Comitia*, or general assembly of the Roman citizens belonged the exclusive privilege of making laws, the election of magistrates, and the declaration of war or peace. In criminal cases they exercised the right of pardon, or acquittal. The *Tribunes* of the people were invested with very high authority; and although originally intended only to mediate between the Plebeians and Patricians, they could annul the decrees of the senate by their negative, and under pretence of measures injurious to the state, could arrest even the consuls themselves. (Liv. lib. iv, sect. 26, &c.) As some balance to these privileges of the people, their assemblies paid great respect to the decrees of the senate, and to the sentiments of persons illustrious for their rank, and respectable for the offices they held in the state. Still, however, the branches of the constitution stood much in need of a common principle of union; and as their privileges were so extensive, and their power was so independent, they were frequently involved in contention and discord. But the great personal liberty enjoyed by every individual, added, to an enthusiastic patriotism, frequently united them; and

even their contests for superiority served ultimately to establish a firm and equal balance of power.

The spirit of aristocracy, infused into the government by Servius Tullius, was preserved afterwards in the commonwealth; and this gave rise to perpetual contests between the Patricians and Plebeians. (B. C. 550. Liv. lib. i, c. 42.) The former, favoured by the senate, recommended by dignity of character, and illustrious birth, as they were descended from the senators of the first age of Rome, for some time had sufficient influence to confine to themselves the great offices of the state. When the latter, after repeated struggles, had obtained new privileges, the republic enjoyed more internal tranquillity, and her battles were fought with greater ardour; but by the oppression and cruelty which frequently followed, it proved dangerous to invest an ignoble and indigent citizen with the sovereign authority, as was fatally experienced during the bloody proscriptions of Marius and Sylla. Sometimes many evils resulted from the prevalence of the popular government, and sometimes the Plebeians exercised their rights with moderation; and when they had acquired the privilege of choosing the magistrates, they frequently showed a magnanimous contempt of power. However fierce and bold, and however irritated by opposition, they were still submissive to the established laws and public authority. Their dissensions gave a keener edge to their temper, and greater activity to their conduct. They encouraged the growth of all those virtues, which were calculated to conciliate the affections of friends, strike terror into enemies, and increase the necessity of personal merit. Thus did they form their hardy youth for the different situations of war and peace; as candidates for public offices at home, or competitors for fame abroad.

The close and inseparable connexion, which subsisted between the civil and military departments, sufficiently marks the character of the Roman people. In the enrolment of the census, a plebeian was reckoned as a foot soldier, a knight as a horseman, and a legion as a detachment of the whole community. The first officers of the state were understood to command the armies of the republic by virtue of their civil magistracy. No citizen could aspire to any high offices before he had performed military service for a certain term of years; and even in the extraordinary commissions, which were occasionally given, civil and military rank was never disjoined. The education of a soldier was the first step to all the honours of the state; and the same personal qualities, which were necessary for the general, were necessary for the pretor or the consul. However difficult it may appear to blend in due proportions the characters of the soldier and the citizen; yet it is evident, that in Rome the union was really effected, and became productive of the boldest determinations in the senate, and the most invincible spirit in the field. Ferguson, vol. i, c. 3.

In the transactions of affairs with foreign states, the policy of the Romans was as refined as their conduct in the field was heroic. That this policy was the result of regular and systematic principles, and did not proceed from accident or particular contingencies, appears from the pursuit of the same measures in the early, as well as in the advanced state of the republic. Whenever occupied by an important war, the Romans dissembled injuries received from other states, till a convenient time of retaliation. As they did not always make *peace with sincerity*, their treaties were sometimes no *more than short suspensions from hostilities*; and they

took care to introduce into them such conditions as ultimately proved detrimental, and even destructive to their enemies. (Montesquieu, *Grandeur des Romains*, c. vi.) When they had conquered a powerful prince, they insisted upon his not making war upon his neighbours, under pretence of their alliance with themselves; and, by this prohibition, they in effect deprived him of the exercise of his military power. Whenever two nations were at war, although not authorized by any alliance to interfere, they always espoused the cause of the weaker party. They never commenced hostilities in a distant country, without procuring some ally near the enemy, whom they intended to attack. This measure contributed greatly to their success in their wars with Carthage. The title of ally, indeed, was no more than a splendid and specious name, under which they availed themselves of the strength and the resources of other nations. So firm was their adherence to their fundamental maxim, to spare the vanquished, and subdue the proud, that they were not to be moved by any reverses of fortune, however disastrous, to solicit peace. They looked with calmness upon the advances even of a victorious enemy; and, in the midst of public disasters and defeats, displayed the sedate dignity and unshaken firmness of their genuine character. Their conduct to subdued countries showed the refinement of consummate politicians. They were cautious not to impose their laws and customs upon the nations they had subdued, as such conduct must unavoidably have produced the most formidable confederacies and insurrections: on the contrary, actuated by a spirit of mild and liberal toleration, they left them in the undisturbed exercise of their religion and laws; and only enforced such general principles of subordination, as

corrected natural ferocity of disposition, inclined them to adopt the arts and customs of their conquerors, and induced them to regard the Romans, rather as their benefactors, than their masters.\*

In the vast compass of their dominions, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Danube to the deserts of Libya, was felt the influence of their laws. Colonies were planted, municipal towns were honoured with the privileges of Roman citizens, federal states enjoying their own customs and laws were civilized, and the most useful public edifices, such as bridges, aqueducts, and temples, adorned the different provinces. The wars, which had desolated neighbouring countries with incessant fury, were terminated by their superior influence; and their tributaries, united like the branches of one family, enjoyed a degree of intercourse and peace, to which the world before that auspicious period had been a stranger. Their political conduct, although sometimes versatile, and accommodated to circumstances, was frequently directed by justice, generosity, honour, and disinterestedness; and these virtues, supported by the great extent of their dominion, and the terror of their arms, diffused a blaze of glory round the Roman name, which dazzled the eyes of all nations.

\* Tacitus has informed us of the methods adopted by the politic Agricola, to soften the rugged manners of the Britons, and make them patient of the Roman yoke. "Jam vero principum filios liberalibus artibus erudire, inde etiam habitus nostri honor, et frequens toga; paulatimque discessum ad delinimenta vitorum, porticus et balnea, et convivorum elegantiam: idque apud imperitos *humanitas* vocabatur, cum *pars servitutis* esset." *Taciti Vita Agric. p. 426. Ed. Grav.* The last words of the sentence disclose to us the refined policy of the Romans.

In the year of Rome 556, when the Greeks were met to celebrate the Isthmian games at Corinth, a herald advanced into the middle of the amphitheatre, and having commanded silence by sound of trumpet, he proclaimed that the Roman senate and Titus Quinctius the general, in consequence of having conquered Philip, King of Macedon, restored liberty and the free exercise of their own laws, to all the provinces of Greece. So transported were the assembled multitudes with this unexpected declaration, that they could scarcely credit the testimony of their senses; and so completely did joy possess their minds at the news of this auspicious event, that they could not fix the least attention upon the performance of the games. As soon as they were concluded, the crowds hastened to express their gratitude to the Roman general. "How happy, exclaimed they, in this transport of exultation, is it for the world, that there should exist a people who glory in expending their treasures, and enduring the hardships of war to procure the liberty of others. This people do not confine their generous exertions to the neighbouring states, but even traverse the ocean to repel injustice, and establish Religion and Law. Oppressed as we were by the yoke of a foreign tyrant, we now regain our ancient independence by the proclamation of a Roman herald. The hope of such happiness could only be the result of an aspiring mind; to realize such an expectation requires the singular favour of the Gods, and the greatest generosity of Men." Livy, lib. 33, c. 32, &c.

The destination of the Romans to war was the first principle of their original institutions; it was cultivated by their kings, and invariably pursued throughout every age of the commonwealth. It arose indeed

primarily from the nature of their situation. The subjects of Romulus were composed of a mixed banditti, who made themselves obnoxious to the neighbouring states by the frequency of their predatory excursions. As such lawless conduct subjected them not only to just retaliation, but to the severest infliction of revenge, the wars, which the Romans at first began for the sake of plunder, were soon continued upon principles of self-preservation: they became the objects of fear or of envy to all the surrounding people; and king after king, and state after state, came forth to crush their aspiring power. Alba looked with a jealous eye upon the prosperity of her colony, and attempted its overthrow. The Volsci, Sabines, Samnites, Latins, and Etrurians succeeded; and the Gauls attacked them with such numerous armies, as often in the early ages of the republic threatened their destruction.

The short duration of the consular government, although liable to some inconveniencies, was to men of courage and talents a strong incentive to martial exploits.\* Various causes usually operate to set bounds to the ambition of monarchs. In the course of a long reign, many passions, and even indolence itself, successively rule their minds. But as the office of the chief magistrates of the republic was confined to a single year, they were impatient to signalize their short command by great and glorious achievements. The moment propitious to emulation and a love of glory was

\* Livy states particularly the inconveniencies with regard to military operations, which arose from the short period of the consular power. I have endeavoured to reconcile that historian with Montesquieu, with whom he is at issue upon this subject. Compare Montesquieu, *Grandeur*, c. i, with Livy, lib. xli, c. 15. lib. xxiv, c. 8. lib. ix, c. 18.



not to be lost. They were powerfully stimulated to put a quick period to any war, in which they were engaged, by some rapid and decisive measures; lest the harvest of victory and fame should be reaped by their successors. For the indulgence of this spirit of enterprise, the most extensive scope was afforded, by a long series of campaigns, battles, and sieges; as the temple of Janus was shut only three times during the long period of 700 years, and only once whilst Rome was subject to a consular government, at the close of the first Punic war.\*

II. This martial spirit, of which such plain vestiges may be traced in the early manners of the people, was matured by the strictest attention to discipline, by every encouragement to bear the labours of war, and by the invention and perfection of every expedient which could improve the arts of attack and defence.†

Their discipline was the result of innumerable dangers, and of painful and long experience. Their attachment to it was equally politic and firm; for they were too acute not to discern that it was the most effectual support of their power. The military oath was administered under peculiar circumstances of solemnity. The legionary soldier swore with alacrity never to desert the golden eagle, which was displayed in the front of his cohort or squadron. To this he looked up as to a tutelary god, under whose wings he fought with

\* A. U. C. 517, in the consulship of Atilius Bulbus and Manlius Torquatus.

† Polybius, book vi. Gibbon, vol. i, c. 1, and his notes and authorities. Of the Roman discipline, castrametation, arms, marches, and martial laws, there is a very curious and distinct account in Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. iii, c. 5.

confidence, and by whose guidance he was assured he should be led to victory.\*

In the spacious field of Mars, which was pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Tyber, the ardent youth were exeroised in feats of manly activity: here the charioteers contended in the rapid race, and the youthful recruits were trained to hurl the spear, and manage the horse. The veterans here performed their various evolutions in toilsome review. Nothing was wanting to give this busy scene the complete appearance of a field of battle, but the effusion of blood. The soldiers were animated not only by the presence, but the example, of their leaders. Even in the decline of life Marius continued his accustomed exercises in this place, and here Pompey displayed his unrivalled skill in horsemanship.

When the army, previously trained to every martial exercise, had taken the field, the Roman general found that the surest expedient to efface the dishonour of a defeat, was to increase the labours of the campaign, rather than to diminish the vigour of his troops, by any relaxation of duty. Sylla compelled his soldiers, after they had fled before Mithridates, to labour with such incessant assiduity, that they called for another battle, as a respite from their fatigues. Their toil not only inured them to hardships, but preserved their constitutions vigorous and healthy, as they avoided those sudden changes from extreme exertion to extreme ease, which are so injurious to modern armies.

\* Tacitus expressly calls the standards, "*Propria legionum numina*," and "*bellorum deos*." Tertullian well remarks, "*Religio Romanorum tota castrensis, signa veneratur, signa Jurat, et omnibus diis præponit.*" Murphy's Tacitua.

Their native courage had every assistance, which it could in any degree derive from constant practice, and habitual skill. Their arms were heavier than those of other nations, and their dexterity in using them was the result of confirmed habit. By the management of all kinds of weapons, and by the practice of every movement, which could give additional strength and activity to the body, they were gradually trained to real action.

During the short intervals of peace, they were engaged in the hardy occupation of agriculture, the only pacific employment which was thought worthy of a Roman citizen. To turn the stubborn soil, to be exposed to all the changes of weather, to subsist upon a frugal diet, and undergo every rural labour, were the best preparatives for war. In the early ages of the commonwealth, this employment was ennobled by the practice of consuls and dictators, who tilled their paternal fields with their own hands; and Cincinnatus, Fabius, and Fabricius, were called from the plough to fill the greatest offices of state, and lead their countrymen to battle.

The Romans looked with attention upon the warlike appointments and arms of other nations, and showed their profound judgment in quickly adopting expedients to supply their own defects. They copied the form of the Sabine shield, and armed their troops with the Spanish sword. Horses for their cavalry were procured from Numidia; and the wreck of a Carthaginian vessel, fortunately thrown upon their coast, was the model of their first ship of war. At the beginning of the contest with Carthage, they had not a single vessel of this description; but at its close they were masters of the sea. They stationed the captured

elephants, which had been employed against them in the Punic wars, in the front of their army against Philip of Macedon. The genius of such a people, so versatile and alive to improvement, seemed to form them for extensive empire; and hence it is the less extraordinary, that the ready adoption of foreign arms and inventions proved destructive to the nations which originally used them.\*

But the peculiar glory of Roman tactics arose from the formation and discipline of the legion. Agreeable to the genius of the people, it was better calculated for attack than defence. With respect to activity it had great advantages over the Grecian and Macedonian phalanx, which was only so constructed, as to force its way by the depth and solidity of its compact and closely-wedged ranks. The open order which the legionary troops preserved, gave to every soldier the free exercise of his arms, and afforded space for reinforcements to advance to the relief of those, whose strength was exhausted. The spaces likewise gave room for the first to fall back into the second, and with them to make a new attack; and if these two ranks when united were overpowered, they retired to the rear rank, with whose assistance they renewed the charge with three-fold impetuosity. The regular manner in which this advance or retreat was conducted, constituted the perfection of the Roman discipline. The success, which it must finally secure, was certain, when we consider the legions opposed to irregular barbarians, who, if once routed, never returned to a second attack. In many battles, the Romans were at first repulsed by the number or impetuosity of the hostile troops: but by

\* *Montesquieu*, c. i, ii. *Kennet*, p. 239. *Gibbon*, vol. i, p. 12. *Polybius*, lib. vi, sect. 20, 21, 24. edit. Gronov.

their judicious arrangements and evolutions, the event was ultimately favourable; the enemy was checked in the midst of his successful career, and the laurel of victory was suddenly snatched from his hands\*.

The first model of a Roman camp seems to have been first suggested by the rude intrenchments, which Romulus caused to be thrown up to defend his rising city. This plan was in succeeding times greatly improved; and the camp of the Romans was remarkable for the perfect regularity of its quadrangular form: it was divided by parallel lines, composing spacious streets, for the accommodation, in separate detachments, of cavalry, infantry and auxiliaries; was secured by the breadth and depth of its ditch, and the loftiness of its ramparts, armed with a line of strong and close palisades. When at this day we trace the remaining vestiges of their encampments, we can in some degree realize the descriptions which the ancients have given us, and fairly infer the greatness of their strength from their long duration. Many camps in this island, and upon the continent, such as that near Kyneton, upon the borders of Herefordshire, the camp near Dorchester in Dorsetshire; at Caster, or Venta Icenorum, near

\* Gibbon, vol. i. c. 1. Ferguson c. 3, and the cited passages. Livy contrasts the phalanx with the legion, and points out the superior excellence of the latter, when comparing the forces of Alexander with the Romans. "Statarius uterque miles, ordines servans: sed illa phalanx immobilis et unius generis: Romana acies distinctior, ex pluribus partibus constans: facilis partienti, quacunq; opus esset, facilis jungenti." Liv. lib. viii, c. 8, et lib. ix.

"Yet was this *phalanx* never or very seldom able to stand against the Roman armies, which were embattelled in so excellent a form, as I know not whether any nation besides them have used, either before or since." Sir W. Raleigh, p. 263.

Norwich; Cæsar's camp upon the Rhine, and that which overtops the white cliffs of Dieppe, may be supposed, from their present fresh and unbroken appearance, to have been formed only a few centuries ago.

The elegant and lively historian Livy, presents us with a very striking instance of the effect produced upon the minds of their enemies, by the martial improvements made by the Romans. Philip the second, king of Macedon, caused the bodies of some of his soldiers, who had fallen in a skirmish, to be brought into his camp, that they might be buried with military honours. His motive was to instigate his army to expose themselves with more alacrity to the dangers of war. But the method he took to rouse their courage, produced a contrary effect, inclined them to inactivity, and increased their fears. His troops, who had been accustomed to fight with the Greeks and Illyrians, and to inflict and receive only slight wounds made by darts and arrows, now beheld the bodies of their dead comrades marked by deep and ghastly cuts, and deprived of heads and limbs by the keen and vigorous strokes of the Spanish swords, the weighty weapons of the Romans. With dismay they reflected upon the enemies with whom they had to contend, and the great superiority of their arms, and mode of fighting. Philip himself, no less alarmed, recalled his son Perseus and his troops from the straits of Pelagonia to reinforce his desponding army. From a lofty hill he soon after reconnoitered the position of the enemy, and took a distinct view of their camp. He remarked the different quarters into which it was divided, the exact order in which the tents were pitched, and the intersections which formed the streets. Astonished at the admirable arrangement of all the parts, he candidly acknow-

ledged, as Pyrrhus king of Epirus had done before, that no nation could equal the Romans in the skill displayed in this essential branch of the art of war. Liv. lib. 31, c. 36.

But the Romans found, that the perfection of their movements in the field, and the security of their position in camps, would not complete the military art, without imposing the strictest restraints upon the conduct of a soldier, and holding out the most lucrative and glorious recompense for his valour. Such was the inflexible rigour of martial law, that cowardice and disobedience led to inevitable death, inflicted by the swords and darts of his comrades; whilst, on the other hand, every exploit was attended by its appropriate honour. The rich trappings of horses, the golden chain, the civic, the mural, and the rostral crowns, awaited the return of the veteran from the field of battle; and pensions arising from the sale of the conquered lands, or settlements upon fertile spots of ground, were granted for the support of his declining age, and as the rewards of his long and faithful services.

The *Triumph*, which derived its origin from the earliest age of the republic, when Romulus returned home laden with spoils of his vanquished enemies, tended in a much greater degree to cherish this martial spirit. (Livy, lib. c. 9. Florus, lib. i, c. 18.) This ceremony, repugnant as it was to the feelings of compassion for the distressed, and calculated to encourage arrogance and ostentation, in point of splendour and pomp, was superior to the honour ever paid to victorious chiefs and armies in any other country. It was attended by an innumerable concourse of applauding spectators, collected from every part of the empire. Such was the glory assigned to Paulus Emilius, the

great conqueror of Macedon, after he had brought Perseus, king of that country, and his family, prisoners to Rome. (B. C. 168. Liv. lib. xlv, c. 39 et 40.) The procession passed through spacious and lofty arches, ornamented with pictures and statues, to the splendid temple of the lofty capital. At first appeared bands of trumpeters, and other martial musicians, who to prepare the spectators for military scenes, sounded the loud and animating charge of battle. The priests, clothed in long robes, and crowned with chaplets, walked by the side of the white oxen of Clitumnus devoted to sacrifice. The sculptured figures, painted banners, and various symbols of the subdued cities and provinces, were distinctly displayed. The gold and silver coin deposited in capacious vases, were carried upon the shoulders of the most robust soldiers. The burnished coats of mail, waving crests, glittering spears, and the golden goblets and rich plate which had adorned the royal banquets of Antigonus and Seleucus, best disposed for the view of the people, were conveyed in long trains of carriages. The chariot of the captive king next appeared, containing his diadem and his armour. Then walked Perseus clad in mourning, with slow and melancholy steps, attended by his children and friends. The golden crowns, sent by the numerous states in alliance with the republic, as tokens of congratulation on her recent conquest, carried in the hands of their respective ambassadors, announced the approach of the conqueror himself. Paulus Emilius appeared standing erect, in a magnificent chariot, that was drawn by four milk white horses; he was clothed in a purple robe, his head encircled with a refulgent diadem, and waving in his hand a branch of laurel. The procession was closed by the whole army bearing the Impe-



rial eagles at the front of their cohorts and squadrons, and intermixing with the song of triumph the praises of their general.

Those who instituted the triumph as a national celebrity, perfectly understood the genius of a people disposed to catch the flame of emulation from every incident, which gave dignity to the character of a soldier. This honour was indeed rarely granted to any officer of inferior rank to a dictator, consul, or prætor: but as each of them shared it in common with every tribune, centurion, and even legionary of his army, it failed not to inspire them all with ardour for military service. The same distinction, therefore, which was the reward of one victory, frequently proved the source of another.

III. Rome at an early period called for the aid of religion, to give greater efficacy to her civil laws and military institutions. Numa lulled the infant kingdom into a short repose, in order to strengthen it by his sacred establishments. (B. C. 713. Liv. lib. i, c. 19, &c.) The attention paid to augury, which was at once the resource and the delusion of the Romans, arose to the highest degree of superstition. Not only the departed heroes, who had been raised to the rank of divinity by the elegant fictions of Greece, as well as the gods of other nations, were naturalised; but every virtue and vice, every art and profession, the deities of every grove and stream, derived a peculiar character from their respective votaries; were represented by images, ornamented with peculiar symbols, and worshipped with appropriate rites. The excessive credulity of the populace, ever eager for the account of prodigies and fables, was at all times flattered by the magistrates, and respected by the philosophers, who however they might smile in secret at the prevailing

superstition, still assumed in public the mask of external reverence for the mythology of their country. The ceremonies of polytheism were in general of the most cheerful tendency; processions to the temples, except in cases of public calamity, were social meetings of festivity; and sacrifices to the gods were little more than the feasts of their worshippers.

A scrupulous attention to religion was the peculiar boast and pride of the Romans: and Cicero hesitates not to assert, that to their piety, and their firm belief in the over-ruling providence of the gods, they were indebted for their ascendancy over all other nations. (Cicero de Harusp. Responsis.) The establishment of pontiffs, flamens, augurs, and vestals, was supported by consecrated lands; and as the civil and military departments were not deemed incompatible with the religious, even emperors, consuls, and generals aspired to, and exercised the offices of the priesthood. The union of religion indeed with the civil government is a striking feature in the Roman policy. Augustus was sensible of its great importance; and he, as well as succeeding emperors, sought to raise himself above the attacks of his enemies, and exalt the respectability of his character to the greatest elevation, by assuming the venerable title and inviolable dignity of the Pontifex Maximus.

IV. The spirit of patriotism was never so generally diffused, nor so long preserved, as in ancient Rome. So ardent were the sentiments which it inspired, and so daring the actions which it excited that it was rather a passion than a habit of the mind. It was the source of numberless virtues; it fostered patience, and alleviated toil; it extinguished the fire of ambition, and even silenced the voice of nature; and taught the Ro-

mans to despise all private interest, and to submit to the severest pain for the benefit of the state. Hence Junius Brutus condemned his traitorous sons to an ignominious death. Regulus, unmoved by the supplications of his weeping relations and friends, and undismayed by the prospect of certain torture, returned to Carthage; and the inflexible Manlius Torquatus, checking the strongest feelings of the heart, devoted his victorious son to the sword of the executioner.

The republic was frequently agitated by the most violent convulsions of party. The debates of the senate were interrupted by the clamorous demands of the tribunes, solicitous to secure the rights of the people. The forum was often a scene of war, and the peaceful gown was stained with blood. Both Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, the intemperate advocates for the revival of the Agrarian law, misled by injudicious zeal for the privileges of the plebeians, fell a sacrifice to the vengeance of aristocratic power; and in a subsequent period, the wants of the profligate, and the ambition of the noble, produced a deep and formidable conspiracy, which was detected by the vigilance of Cicero, and hurried Catiline to open rebellion and death.

Still we find that internal discord was often silenced when intelligence was brought to the city of hostile designs and movements. Such an alarm was sufficient to abate the animosity of contending factions, and to unite every order in the firmest union for the public service. The arrival of Hannibal in Italy produced an immediate cessation of all civil dissensions. The storm which had raged at home suddenly increased its violence, but changed its direction, and fell with redoubled fury upon the common enemy.

From the love of their country immediately resulted, in the purest times of the commonwealth, the sacrifice of every private interest to the public welfare. The Romans foresaw that opulence, by the introduction of luxury, would disqualify them for the toils of war, and destroy that just equality, which limits ambition to the sole desire of acting for the general good. They therefore esteemed poverty a virtue; and this, which in the first inhabitants of Rome was the effect of necessity, became among their descendants, for some ages, an object of choice. They considered it as the sure guardian of liberty, and opposed it to the encroachments of corruption. A Roman, during the purest times of the commonwealth, thought that frugality formed a part of his glory; and at the same time that he exposed his life to every danger, in order to fill the public treasury, he performed military service without stipend or gratuity. Every one thought himself sufficiently opulent in the riches of the state, and would have esteemed it unworthy of his character to require any emolument from the offices with which his country had invested him, and which he held only to contribute to her aggrandizement. The generals, animated by the same noble contempt of wealth as the common soldiers, depended only for their subsistence on their small inheritance of land, which they tilled with their own hands. Regulus requested permission of the Senate to return from the command of the army to the cultivation of his little farm. (B. C. 256.) Paulus Emilius, who filled his native city with the rich spoils of the kings of Macedon, died without sufficient money to defray the expenses of his funeral.

This virtuous and patriotic disposition may be illustrated by the sumptuary laws, which were enacted

at different periods, and which, without any exception in favour of high birth, fortune, or rank, regulated the expenses of every citizen. No articles of luxury escaped the attention of these rigid and sagacious legislators, who saw the necessity of establishing public opulence upon private economy. By the Oppian law the Roman ladies were prohibited from wearing robes of various colours, from having ornaments which exceeded the value of half an ounce of gold, and from being drawn in a chariot by two horses, unless to attend some public solemnity. Orchius limited the number of guests to be invited to entertainments; Fannius regulated the expense of public festivals; and Cornelius confined that of funerals to a very moderate sum. And as a proof that in these pure times any relaxation of such laws was highly disapproved, even by those who were most the objects of their severity, Duronius was expelled the Senate, because, when he served the office of tribune, he had abrogated the law which limited the expense of feasts.\*

\* For the history of the rise and progress of the Roman laws, see Duck de Auctoritate Juris Civilis, Eden's Elements of the Civil Law. For the origin of the laws of the Twelve Tables, and their division into various parts, see Livy, lib. iii, c. 32, 34. Dionysius Halicarnass. b. x. Hook's Roman History, vol. i, b. ii, c. 27. Livy, lib. vi, c. 41. Gravina, lib. ii, c. 28. Polybius, b. 6.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE causes stated in the preceding chapter had the greatest influence upon the sentiments and the conduct of the Romans, both at home and abroad, established their military character, and raised them by slow degrees to the summit of dominion.

Vain were the efforts of the people of Italy to resist them; and the successive attacks of the sovereigns of Macedon, Syria, and Egypt, were equally fruitless. The disgraceful capitulation of the legions in the straits of Caudium, the near approach of Coriolanus to Rome at the head of the Volsci, were productive of no permanent advantage to the conquerors. The armies of the republic were often compelled to flee, or to surrender, and were sometimes reduced to the most humiliating distress. But the severest repulses tended only to give a new spring to their exertions. The impetuous fury of the Gauls, and the alacrity of Pyrrhus, made indeed a temporary impression; but they could not finally prevail. At one time Varro, at another Cneius Scipio was cut off, their forces were routed, and the bravest of their troops were slain; but the courage of the senate and the people was still firm and undaunted; the spirit of their institutions cherished it, and their exertions were too much the result of

calm intrepidity and confirmed habit, to be disconcerted by the fall of a general, the overthrow of an army, or the suspension of a triumph. Victory was sometimes capricious in the distribution of her favours; she flew to give transient success to other nations, and swelled their minds with delusive hopes of conquest. But most propitious to discipline, valour, and perseverance, she failed not finally to encircle with her unfading laurel the brows of her darling Romans.

In the Carthaginians we behold their most formidable enemies. They were the only people, who, by their opulence, territories, spirit, and resources, seemed capable of contending with them for empire, with any prospect of success.\* Their transactions and wars form one of the most interesting portions of the history we are now considering. But unfortunately for their fame, and the wishes of posterity, the chief accounts recorded of them are received from the writings of their prejudiced rivals. The Roman historians take delight in placing all their transactions in the most unfavourable light, and asperse their national character

\* For an accurate account of the constitution, laws, commerce, and dominions of Carthage, see Ferguson's *Roman Republic*, vol. i, p. 88. Into one chapter of moderate length he has compressed the memorable transactions of the second Punic war, p. 106. The account of the battle of Cannæ is detailed with singular precision and perspicuity.

Polybius has drawn a concise but striking contrast between the flourishing condition of Rome, and the declining state of Carthage, at the commencement of the first Punic war, *Lib. vi*, sect. 49, &c. See *Aristot. de Republica*, lib. ii, cap. 9. Polybius supplied Livy with much information relative to the Punic wars. Livy has not only adopted, in many instances, his statement of facts, but even has literally translated his expressions. *Liv. lib. xxx, c. 45*, and *lib. xxxiii, c. 10*.

with the odious imputation of systematic cruelty and perfidy. Nor are the Greek writers totally free from an unfavourable bias, and the influence of similar prejudices. The most impartial and full detail of their government, laws, arts, manners, and institutions, would have been peculiarly interesting to Britain, as they rose to their height of dominion and opulence by the power of their navy, and the extent of their colonies and commerce. During the second Punic war, the full energy of both nations was drawn forth into action. (B. C. 220.) Hannibal combined in his character all the qualifications of a great statesman, and a consummate general; and when the magnitude and the number of the obstacles he surmounted in his invasion of Italy be considered, the extensive and difficult track of country which he traversed, the factious parties of Carthage, which attempted to disconcert all his measures, the discordant interests of the allied forces which he reconciled, and the powerful armies and skilful generals he opposed, he may surely be ranked, where Scipio Africanus, his great rival in arms, did not hesitate to place him, among the greatest heroes of antiquity.

Even after the successive defeats of the Romans at Thrasimene, at Trebia, and the complete destruction of their choicest army at Cannæ, when they were basely deserted by many of their allies, the senate did not relax, even for a moment, the firmness of ancient institutions, and disdained to negotiate with the enemy, while he continued within the territories of the republic. And at that critical conjuncture, far from being dismayed at his approach, they sold by public auction the ground upon which his army was encamped; and it was purchased at the price it would have reached during a period of the utmost tranquility. At the



same time that a body of troops advanced from the city to give battle to Hannibal, another detachment marched out at an opposite gate to reinforce the army in Spain. Livy, lib. xxvi, c. 11.

The victorious Hannibal, instead of making an additional effort of courage in compliance with the advice of his most experienced officers, and marching with rapidity to Rome, immediately after the battle of Cannæ, before his enemies could recover from their consternation, was imprudent enough to allow his soldiers to indulge in the enervating luxuries of Capua. This was the subject of his vain lamentation, as he was reluctantly sailing back to his native country, and beheld for the last time the lessening shores of Italy, that had been so frequently the scenes of his glory. (Liv. lib. xxxiii, cap. 18, &c. lib. xxx, cap. 20.) Such is the interesting account of Livy. But it seems probable that a want of those supplies, which he requested immediately after the battle of Cannæ, was the true cause of the decline of his prosperity, and the ruin of Carthage; as he continued to infest Italy for the course of fourteen years after his stay at Capua, during that time gained several victories, and kept his enemies in a state of constant alarm for the safety of the empire.

The steady ardour of Scipio Africanus turned the tide of success, and the fortune of Hannibal and of Carthage sunk under his triumphant arms. (B. C. 202. Liv. lib. xxx, cap. 35.) The battle of Zama gave to the Romans the dominion of the world. The event of the second Punic war was particularly advantageous, by affording them the means of carrying their conquests into the most distant countries; for after the defeat of the Carthaginians, there were no maritime forces sufficiently powerful to contend with them for the

command of the ocean. As their plan of operations was conducted upon regular principles, their success was not unstable and transitory, like that of Alexander the Great, but continued through the long period of nine centuries to accumulate power, and gradually add kingdom to kingdom.

After Rome had subdued the fairest countries of the ancient world, the arms of her ambitious generals were directed against each other. To the bloody proscriptions of Marius and Sylla succeeded the stratagems and triumphs of the politic and accomplished Julius Cæsar. Elated with his conquests in Gaul, and fired with the most ardent ambition, he passed the Rubicon, the prescribed boundary of his province, to plunge his sword into the bosoms of his countrymen. (B. C. 50. Ferguson, vol. ii, book iii, chap. 1, &c.) The stern virtue of Cato, and the prowess of the amiable Pompey, were ineffectually opposed to the haughty dictator. At length, pierced by the daggers of those friends whose lives he had spared, he expired in the senate-house beneath the statue of his unhappy rival. The debauched and profligate Antony forged new chains for his countrymen; and Brutus and Cassius, who for a long time opposed only mild remonstrances to his enormities and usurpation, at length had recourse to unavailing arms; and the fields of Philippi were stained with their patriotic blood. (Ferguson, vol. ii, chap. 4.) The eloquence of Cicero, which had been successfully directed against the rapacity of Verres, and the conspiracy of Catiline, was the cause of his own lamentable end. With the boldness of truth, and the warmth of indiscretion, he provoked the rage of an implacable tyrant by the enumeration of his private vices. The matchless power

of his talents, the unsullied integrity of his character, and a long life devoted to the service of his friends and the public, pleaded for him in vain. The vindictive Antony fixed his guiltless head upon that rostrum, from which he had so frequently delighted and instructed his countrymen. B. C. 50.

This period of history, from the time of Marius to the accession of Augustus, presents the most calamitous prospect, filled with recitals of sanguinary proscriptions, and crowded with images of martial horror. It abounds with examples of successful villainy, and unavailing virtue. But after the naval victory of Actium had given the empire to Augustus, the scene brightened into the fair views of order and happiness, the storms of civil discord were hushed into peace, and philosophy, literature, and the arts, derived the greatest and most honorable encouragement from his patronage.

To the Tuscans Rome was first indebted for its works of architecture, sculpture, and painting. The qualities, which particularly characterized the productions of that ingenious people, were boldness, solidity, and grandeur, as appear from the foundations of the Capitol, the remains of the Cloaca Maxima, and many other specimens which are still extant. But the superior elegance of Grecian execution attracted the whole attention of the Romans, as soon as their conquests gave them an opportunity of becoming conversant with Grecian works of art.

From the indiscriminate collection of the specimens of the fine arts, arose by slow degrees the genuine taste of the Romans. When Marcellus took Syracuse, he conveyed all the pictures and statues of that elegant city to Rome. The remonstrances of

Fabius Maximus against his conduct were uttered without effect; and in vain did he represent, that as such trifles formed the occupation and the amusement of an idle and an effeminate people, they were beneath the notice of his countrymen, distinguished as they were for the daring energy of their minds, and the manly roughness of their character. The love of the arts, which commenced at this period, was successively gratified by the conquest of those Grecian cities most eminent as the repositories of their productions. The triumph of Emilius was graced with some of the choicest monuments of sculpture; and Mummius, the tasteless conqueror of Achaia, completely stripped Corinth of her statues and pictures, to enrich his native city. Sometimes the vanity, and sometimes the avarice of generals and governors of provinces, contributed to make Rome a magazine of the fairest spoils of Greece; and the custom of adorning the theatres with them by the public authority of the magistrates, contributed to diffuse a refinement of taste. And even during the bloody conflicts of the civil wars, the public and private repositories were considerably enriched; for Sylla brought home the plunder of Athens, and Julius Cæsar formed a valuable collection of ancient gems.

An æra of the highest refinement commenced with the reign of Augustus, whose palace was adorned with the rich vases of Corinth. (B. C. 27.) Grecian artists were invited to Rome, and the masterly execution of the medals of that period, prove their superiority to those of former times. The capital of the world, which Augustus found disgraced by buildings of the rudest forms and materials, displayed under his auspices and those of his son-in-law Agrippa, in its marble palaces, temples, and theatres, all the elegance and majesty of

Grecian architecture. The public edifices were not only furnished with the choicest ornaments of the same country, but the streets and squares exhibited the exquisite images of all the Pagan deities.\*

The same obligations which the Romans owed to Greece for inspiring them with a love of the arts, were extended to philosophy and polite literature, with this remarkable difference, that in the former they were only admirers, and in latter they ventured to be competitors with their great masters. A fondness for sculpture and painting, and the cultivation of eloquence and poetry, kept nearly an equal pace; and the same age saw them arise, and flourish together. Writers, whose works are the glory of ancient Italy, and the subject of encomium for every generation, adorned this golden period, and reached that standard of excellence, from which the unpolished style of their predecessors, and the degenerate affectation of their followers, seem equally remote. Horace and Virgil, Tibullus and Propertius, flourished in the court of Augustus. The two first, indeed, through the noble patronage and friendship of Mæcenas, enjoyed the smiles of the emperor, who was himself distinguished by the elegance of his compositions, and the purity of his taste. The Lyric as well as the Epic muse were grateful for his protection and liberality; and Horace and Virgil, indulging the vanity of the Julian family, who claimed a divine origin, have raised the betrayer of Cicero, and

\* The admirer of ancient sculpture may see some fine specimens of the art in the Pomfret collection in Oxford. But the best school of observation which this country can afford to any one who is desirous of improving his taste, may be found at Mr. Townley's, in Dart-mouth-street, Westminster. For an entertaining account of sculpture, and of English collections in particular, see Mr. Dallaway's *Anecdotes of the Arts*, p. 163, &c.

the colleague of the profligate Antony, to the rank of a deity, and perpetuated his fame in their incomparable poems.

Augustus having always presented to his mind the image of the murdered Julius, studied to avoid his fate by avoiding his conduct. Versed in the deepest arts of dissimulation, he pursued with astonishing success his ambitious career. Yet the equity of his laws, and the prudent administration of his government, during forty years of glory and peace, made no inconsiderable recompense to his country for the evils which he had before inflicted, or countenanced. Rome itself rose to unknown splendour; and his munificence, moderation, and paternal care, were bounded only by the confines of his vast empire. He presented to the world a most extraordinary character, since he proved that the smiles of fortune, far from increasing the severity of his temper, and giving a keener edge to his resentment, could soften a timid and sanguinary tyrant into a mild and generous prince.

Perhaps the character, which the judicious historian of the Roman republic has given of him, may afford the best clue to his conduct. "He does not appear to have had from nature, in any high degree, those dispositions to malice or benevolence, which are the great distinguishing principles of virtue and vice. He seems to have been indifferent to mankind, but desirous of consideration and power, as objects of interest to himself. His ruling passion was a desire to reign. In his way to this end he committed many crimes; but having once effected his purpose, he had no other criminal disposition to gratify: or, after he was sovereign, standing in awe of a free spirit, which he durst not insult, *he either from inclination or policy, and probably in*

part from both, preferred, as it is surprising every one else does not prefer, the proper use of his power to the abuse of it." Ferguson, vol. iii, c. 5, &c.

But notwithstanding the external magnificence of Rome, and her prosperity during his reign and that of his immediate successors, the manners of the people gradually underwent a great change; the state contained in her bosom the causes of her own decay, and the poison of dissolution preyed upon her vitals. She became as abject and degraded, as she had ever been great and powerful. The empress of the world sunk into the most humiliating condition; and her downfall may be attributed, I, to the extinction of patriotism; II, the introduction of luxury; III, the neglect of the ancient modes of education.

The indiscriminate admission of all the subjects of the empire to the freedom of the city, although a conciliating, was a most impolitic measure. Instead of raising the natives of the provinces to the dignity of Romans, this privilege produced the opposite effect, and sunk the latter to a level with the former. It extinguished those high sentiments of patriotism, and that pride of comparison, upon which the old republicans had valued themselves, as it destroyed an exclusive interest in the prosperity of the empire, and degraded the dignity of the Roman character. The right of citizenship was rendered of no value, by being so widely diffused; and the enthusiasm which had fired a Brutus, a Cocles, and a Manlius, to fight for the tombs of their fathers, and the altars of their gods, was extinguished. The people were no longer actuated by the same love of independence, or the same detestation of servility. They looked no more with a jealous eye upon the power of the senate, or the prerogatives

of the patricians; and undistinguished in the crowds of new competitors for the same privileges, they gradually sunk into insignificance. The bond of union and subordination was broken, and the city was torn by innumerable factions of strangers, as soon as every province was allowed to form cabals and associations, and to shelter its inhabitants under the patronage of some powerful nobleman. Montesquieu, cap. ix.

The profusion and extravagance of the rich were displayed in the celebration of the public games. The combats of gladiators, and the races of charioteers were exhibited to the dissolute crowds, who, indulging only the impulse of a childish curiosity, spent whole days in the circus. The licentious productions of the stage, often represented with all the attractions of splendid decorations and crowded processions, vitiated the general taste, inflamed the passions of youth, and encouraged dissipation and immorality of conduct in persons of every class.

II. From the destruction of Carthage may be traced the gradual progress of *luxury*. Profusion and extravagance began to prevail as soon as the precious metals were introduced in abundance. Voluptuousness usurped the place of temperance, indolence succeeded to activity; self-interest, sensuality, and avarice, totally extinguished that ardour, which in ancient times had glowed in every breast for the general good. The streams of wealth that flowed into Rome at the decline of the commonwealth, were such as almost exceed belief.\* The corruption that prevailed at this time

\* Ferguson, vol. iii, p. 346. Polybius, lib. vi, sect. 54. See the excellent note of Brotier de *Luxu Romanorum*. Tacitus, tom. i, p. 402, 4to. ed.



forms the strongest contrast imaginable to the pure times of the republic, when Polybius wrote his history. He contrasts the inflexible honour of the manly Romans with the perfidious character of the effeminate Greeks. The luxurious feasts of the Romans, the number of their domestics, and the variety of their places of residence, sometimes kept pace with, and sometimes even exceeded their great revenues. Apicius, the celebrated epicure, committed suicide, because his fortune, inadequate to the enormous demands of his depraved appetite, did not exceed the sum of eighty thousand pounds. Seneca mentions single suppers, which consumed the whole estate of a Roman knight. No fewer than eighteen elegant villas, situated in the most delightful parts of Italy, were possessed by Cicero: and, as if the land was not sufficient to satisfy the caprice of a Roman of fashion, the lakes and the sea were occupied by houses, which extended a considerable distance from the shores. To every nobleman belonged such numerous parties of slaves, that they were classed according to their nations, and stationed in separate divisions of his palaces.

The republic, which had long withstood the shocks of external violence, fell gradually a prey to prosperity. Her gallant chiefs had viewed with undaunted eye the approach of Hannibal, and defied the armies of Pyrrhus: but their degenerate descendants, even the posterity of Fabius and of Scipio, enriched with the spoils of Greece, and surfeited with the luxuries of Asia, leaving their battles to be fought by barbarian mercenaries, sunk supine on beds of sloth, and heard the trumpet of battle with dismay.

Such indeed was the rapid change of manners, that the genius and character of the people appear to have

undergone a total alteration in the space of a century, and a general depravity was visible in all orders of the state. The consuls, after having obtained their elevated rank by intrigues and bribery, undertook their campaigns either to enrich themselves with the spoils of conquered nations, or to plunder the provinces of the allies under the mask of protectors and defenders. From such impure sources were derived the immense treasures of Crassus, Lucullus, and Cæsar. And as the means of corruption increased, so likewise in equal proportion did the disposition to be corrupted. The populace of the empire were tempted to the city by the distribution of corn, and the frequency of public games; obsequious, indigent, and enervated by idleness, they were ready to follow every ambitious candidate, who was rich enough to purchase their votes. The laws were silent in the midst of these abuses, or they were listened to without respect or obedience. The magistrates beheld with approbation, or with indifference, the disorders of the people. The administration of government under the emperors, influenced by the caprice of their tempers, was sometimes rigid, and sometimes relaxed: the tide of degeneracy flowed with the greatest rapidity, and swept away all ranks in its current.

To increase this train of destructive evils, the mode of *education* was completely changed. In more ancient times the noble matrons had taught their children the pure lessons of morality, and kept a strict watch over all their words and actions. Thus Cornelia educated the Gracchi, and Aurelia and Attia reared Julius and Augustus Cæsar. The minds of the noble youth were led on, sound and uncontaminated, to the study of the liberal arts, and whatever profession they followed,

whether of arms, or the practice of the forum, they devoted themselves to that single pursuit, and by close application embraced the whole compass of their particular study. But in the times of which we are speaking, the children were entrusted to the care, or rather were abandoned to the arts of mean and ignorant domestics. The persons chiefly employed for this purpose were the indigent Greeks, who flocked in great numbers to Rome, and where versatility of talents, insinuating manners, and gross flattery gained them an easy admission into the families of the great, where they soon raised themselves to places of confidence and emolument. Corrupted by the examples, and encouraged by the indulgence of such masters, the young men soon assumed the character of licentiousness and effrontery. The sports of the field, and the diversions of the circus and the theatre, became the sole topics of their conversation, and the darling objects of their pursuit; and no time was given to the cultivation of the liberal arts, or the study of the Roman or Grecian history. Quintil. de Oratoribus, p. 451. Ed. Lips. Juvenal, Sat. 3.

Nor were their opinions upon the most important subjects less vitiated in early years by the progress of a specious and destructive philosophy. The principles of Epicurus had been for some time fashionable in Rome; and his disciples advancing far beyond the modest scepticism of the Academic school, boldly denied the providence of a supreme Ruler of the universe, and openly maintained that death was the extinction of all existence. These tenets gave a fatal blow to the established religion, and were calculated to undermine the great sanctions of moral obligation. The noble youths who resorted to Athens, and other seats

of learning, were thus taught to despise the ceremonies, and deride the maxims of their national belief, a firm adherence to which had been the glory of their ancestors, and had not only operated powerfully upon their martial efforts, but was closely connected with the civil constitution of the republic. This philosophy had the recommendation of great and attracting examples to make it popular; for it was adorned with the poetical graces of Lucretius, and honoured by the commendation of Virgil; it was favoured by the scepticism of Cicero, and was embraced by the sagacious Cæsar, and the learned and accomplished Atticus.

The various causes of her decline prepared Rome for her most abandoned emperors. The tame servility of the senate, and the turbulent spirit of the prætorian bands, sometimes raised to the imperial purple the meanest and most underserving of the soldiers. Yet the corruption of principles was not so general, as not to make a Nero, a Tiberius, and a Caligula surveyed with horror and detestation by their contemporaries, as well as by posterity. They were alike infamous for a profusion, which was unbounded; for a sensuality, which was a disgrace to nature; and for a vindictive rage, which was the avowed foe to liberty and virtue. From the pictures of their depravity and wanton cruelty we retire with disgust, and relieve our minds by contemplating the pure characters and glorious conduct of Titus, Nerva, Trajan, the Antonini, and Aurelius. (A. C. 80—160.) Such illustrious persons afforded some support to the declining state, but were not capable of giving permanency to their own wise and prudent institutions; since those who followed, as well as those who preceded them, were equally distinguished by a want of political talents, and for the most

flagrant abuse of power. The faint and transient beams of sunshine served only to deepen the gloom which overspread a stormy atmosphere. Their justice and humanity suspended that downfall of the empire, which they could not prevent; but the sparks of ancient virtue were so nearly extinguished, that the efforts of a few individuals, eminent as they were in station, and armed with sovereign authority, could not fan them into a flame.

As the prosperity of Rome had been attended with the flourishing state of the arts, literature and science, they gradually declined with her; and the same change, which was visible in the extinction of liberty and martial spirit, appeared equally in its effects on the intellectual powers: ignorance was the companion of corruption and servility.

The Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns issuing from the north of Europe and Asia at length poured forth vast armies, to ravage every country more cultivated than their own, and to possess themselves of the seat of government. They were drawn from their remote forests and cold abodes, either by a spirit of restless activity, and a sense of injury; or they were lured by the report of the luxuries of Italy, and the delicious fruits which abounded in that mild and genial climate.

As oft have issued host impelling host,  
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast,  
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields  
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields;  
With grim delight the brood of winter view  
A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue,  
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,  
And quaff the pendant vintage, as it grows.

GRAY.

These hardy barbarians rushed forth like the mighty waters of an impetuous torrent, and swept away every obstacle: their progress was marked by blood and fire, by destruction to the arts, and implacable hostility to civilized man. For nearly two centuries they continued the most desolating ravages; and the historians of that wretched period are at a loss for description sufficiently strong, or images sufficiently horrid, to represent its distress and calamity. Robertson's *Charles V.*, vol. i, p. 6, 10, &c.

The condition in which the rapacious and warlike Alaric found the imperial city, sufficiently manifested the degeneracy of its inhabitants. (A. C. 410.) It had long been the resort of all nations, and the receptacle of those, whose follies and vices proved the different countries of their birth. To the incapacity of a weak government, the general of the Goths opposed intrepidity and military skill. His army indeed reflected the image of the ancient Romans at that momentous period of their history, when the fruitless attempt of Hannibal to conquer his enemies served only to draw forth the full energy of their character. A fierce, hardy, and well-disciplined army, had to contend, if contest it might be called, with a luxurious and pusillanimous race of nobles, and a populace, vile, indigent, and wretched. The conqueror found the city unprepared for his attacks; he entered it amid the silence of the night, and directed his march by the conflagration of palaces. The slaughter was dreadful, the spoils immense, and the holy faith of Christ alone checked the avarice and lust of the plunderers. To complete the degradation of the imperial city, the sons and daughters of consuls and patricians attended at the *festive board*, and were doomed to drag the chains of the

haughty Goths, who displayed their triumphant banner waving over the prostrate eagle of Rome.

The rise, aggrandizement, decline, and fall of the Roman power, are included within the compass of twelve centuries.\* The mighty empire, like the majestic temples that adorned her capital, was broken into fragments, and divided among numerous nations. At the end of that period, by the incursions of foreign armies, the first foundations of those kingdoms were laid, which are now the most distinguished in the history of the western world. The Saxons contended successfully with the natives for the possession of Britain. Gaul and Spain were divided between the Franks, Visigoths, Suevi, and Burgundians; Africa was exposed to the Vandals and Moors; and Italy was filled by an army of northern barbarians.† Constantinople, which continued for some centuries after the reign of its celebrated founder to give an imperfect representation of imperial splendour, was finally taken by the Turks with its dependent territories. The Roman empire resembled the Danube, which, after pouring a grand and impetuous flood, and receiving the supply of large rivers, is divided into various streams, before it mixes with the ocean.

The Romans, illustrious as they were for the dignity of their character, their martial prowess, and the extent of their empire, hold forth a splendid light for

\* Rome was founded B. C. 753. Taken by Alaric A. C. 410. Duration of the Empire 1163. Gibbon, vol. iii, p. 235, &c.

† For a general view of Europe at the dissolution of the Roman empire, see the Preface to Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*; Warton's first *Dissertation on English Poetry*; Robertson's *History of Charles V.*, vol. i, chap. i. Machiavel's *History of Florence*, book i; and Dalrymple's *Essay on Feudal Property*.

the guidance of mankind. Their virtues in the prosperity of the commonwealth, and their vices in its decline, furnish examples and cautions to persons of all succeeding times. In those kings and emperors, who were remarkable for purity of character, monarchs may find examples worthy of their imitation; and commonwealths may be taught, from the disorders of their factions, what limits to prescribe to the ambition of the wealthy, and what curb to impose upon the licentiousness of the populace. To be conversant with this important history is to view mankind engaged in the fullest exercise of patriotism, courage, and talents; or to contemplate them enervated by luxury, debased by corruption, and sunk into the most abject disgrace.

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O Luxury

Bane of elated life, of affluent states,  
 What dreary change, what ruin is not thine?  
 How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind,  
 To the soft entrance of thy rosy bower  
 How dost thou lure the fortunate and great!  
 Dreadful attraction! while behind thee gapes  
 The unfathomable gulf, where Ashur lies  
 O'erwhelm'd, forgotten, and high-boasting Cham,  
 And Elam's haughty pomp, and beauteous Greece,  
 And the great Queen of Earth, imperial Rome.

DYER'S Fleece.

In what manner the Romans declined from their greatest excellence of character, and how in their degeneracy of manners they involved the decay of genius, our imperfect sketch of their history has shown. Let the natives of Britain, perusing the instructive lessons here presented to them, indulge the feelings of compassion for the weakness of human nature; and let them at the same time collect, from such edifying examples, new encitements to energy and perseverance in every public and private virtue.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE.

AS *Government* and *Laws* are rendered more conducive to general happiness in modern than they ever were in ancient times; as the *Manners* of society have experienced a very great improvement in proportion to the wide diffusion of knowledge, and the facility of communication; as *Navigation* has enlarged the intercourse of mankind by the discovery of a new world; and as, moreover, the light of the protestant churches has dispelled much of the darkness of superstition in some nations, and beamed with splendour upon others; it must surely be a subject of pleasing inquiry, to investigate the leading causes which have produced such extraordinary, such extensive, and such beneficial effects.

And when we examine more closely the nature of these effects, and consider that they have an immediate reference to our own situations in the world; that they relate to the arts which *now* adorn, and the customs which *now* regulate society; to the institutions which direct our conduct, model our manners, and influence our opinions, in all religious, as well as civil affairs; the subject will rise to a much higher degree of importance; we shall see our interest more strongly involved in it; we shall prosecute our researches with a degree of ardour proportioned to its importance, and

shall set its just value upon the history of modern Europe.

The most striking objects, which this history presents to us, are,

I, The establishment and abolition of the Feudal System. II, The history of the Crusades. III, The institution of Chivalry. IV, The Reformation. V, The revival of Classical Learning.

To trace the historical outlines of those institutions, inventions, and discoveries, which discriminate the history of modern from that of ancient Europe, is our present design. To those eminent writers who have discussed the respective subjects at large, we must refer for more complete information.

#### I. THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.

The inhabitants of the north of Europe and Asia, who issued in great multitudes from their native forests, during the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian æra, and who overturned the Roman empire, introduced a new species of government into the conquered countries, which is known by the name of the Feudal System. It is very remarkable that although the barbarians who framed it, settled in their newly acquired territories at various times, were commanded by different leaders, and spoke different languages; yet the system was established, with little variation, in every country in Europe. This great uniformity is peculiarly striking, and has furnished some writers with an argument, that all these people sprung originally from the same stock. But the fact may perhaps with more probability be attributed to the similar state of their manners, and the similar situation in which

they all found themselves, on taking possession of their new domains.

The *plan* of the *feudal* constitution was this: Every freeman, or soldier, for the terms were at that period synonymous, upon receiving an allotment of conquered lands, bound himself to appear in arms against the common enemy, whenever he should be called upon by his commander. This military service was the condition upon which every one received, and the tenure by which he continued to possess his lands; and this obligation was esteemed both easy and honourable. The same service which a soldier owed to his officer was due from an officer to his king. The king obliged those, among whom he distributed the conquered lands, to repair to his standard, with a number of followers, in proportion to the extent of their respective estates, and to assist him in all his expeditions. Thus a feudal kingdom conveys rather the idea of a military than a civil establishment. The victorious army taking their posts in different districts of a country, continued to be arranged under its proper officers, and to be subject to martial laws.\*

The principle of policy upon which this singular establishment was founded, was self-defence. The new-settlers in a country wished to protect themselves, not only against the attacks of the inhabitants, whom they had expelled from their possessions, but against the more formidable inroads of fresh invaders. But, unfortunately for the happiness of mankind, and the

\* See Henry's History of England, vol. i, p. 30. Spelman's Concilia, vol. i, p. 101. Wilson's Concilia, p. 171. Du Cange's Glossary, Article *Allodium*. Robertson's Charles V, vol. i, notes; and Dalrymple's Essay on Feudal Property, book i chap. 2.

tranquility of society, it was replete with many evils. The powerful vassals of the crown soon acquired that land as unalienable property, which was originally a grant during pleasure, and appropriated to themselves titles of honour, as well as places of trust. In process of time they obtained the power of sovereign jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, within their own domains; they exercised the privilege of coining money, and carried on wars against their private enemies. Barons possessed of such enormous power disdained to consider themselves as subjects; and the consequence was, that a kingdom was broken into as many separate principalities, as it contained powerful nobles. Innumerable causes of jealousy and discord subsisted between them, and gave rise to constant wars. Every country in Europe, either wasted or kept in continual alarm during these feuds, was filled with castles and places of strength erected for the security of the despotic chieftain, not against foreign invasion, but domestic hostilities. In the reign of Stephen of England, when the feudal system was in its height, not less than a thousand castles, with their dependent territories, are said to have covered the southern part of this island. Among fierce and haughty chieftains the laws enacted by princes and magistrates commanded no degree of respect! and the right of retaliation and revenge was considered as an inherent privilege of their order. The estate of every baron was an independent territory; his castle was a strong and well garrisoned fortress, and he always considered himself as living in a state of war. When provoked by injury he met his adversary at the head of his vassals in hostile array, and trusted to his sword for the decision of the contest. Every man was

the avenger of his own wrongs, and sought the redress of his grievances in single combat, the regulation and ceremonies of which were formed into a system of jurisprudence. The common people, the most useful as well as the most numerous part of the community, were reduced to the miseries of slavery. The peasant was considered as the mere produce of the soil, and was transferred from one lord to another, with the utensils and cattle of his farm. The king, stripped of almost every prerogative, and possessing little more than the empty title of sovereign, had neither power to protect the innocent, nor to punish the guilty. A general anarchy, destructive of all the comforts which men expect to derive from a state of society, prevailed. To complete and confirm these evils, the progress of time gradually fixed and rendered venerable an establishment which originated in violence, and was continued with every species of despotism and injustice; a system which was as hostile to the intellectual as to the moral improvement of the mind; which banished science and the arts, sunk mankind in gross ignorance, obscured the sacred light of christianity in the thickest darkness of superstition, and was favourable only to the growth of those stern virtues, which are characteristic of uncivilized nations. The rigour of tyranny hardened the minds of the nobles, the yoke of vassalage debased the spirit of the people, the generous sentiments inspired by a sense of equality were extinguished, and there was no check to ferocity and violence. Accordingly a greater number of those atrocious actions, which fill the mind with astonishment and horror, occur in the history of the feudal times, than in that of any period of the same extent in the annals of Europe.

Such was the deplorable state of society from the seventh to the eleventh century. From that æra may be dated the return of government, laws, and manners, in a contrary direction. We shall hereafter notice the favourable effects of the Crusades and of Chivalry upon the feudal system. In succeeding times a variety of causes began to operate, which checked the licentiousness of the barons, softened the ferocity of their manners, and finally put a period to their domination. The establishment of standing armies in the fifteenth century gave more effectual authority to kings; and from that time they no longer regarded their nobles as their equals, or found it necessary to have recourse to timid counsels, or feeble efforts, to controul their power. They began not only to wield the sceptre, but to brandish the sword; and either checked the designs of their barons by intimidation, or punished their rebellion by force.

Charles the seventh of France, urged by his desire of expelling the English from France in the year 1445, was the first who adopted this measure; but as it was so repugnant to the genius of the feudal system, and required the greatest boldness to carry it into execution, he retained a large body of forces in his service, and appointed funds for their regular payment. The principal nobility soon resorted to his standard, and looked up to him as the judge, and the rewarder of merit. The feudal militia, composed of men of rank and military talents, who were only occasionally called out, were in time regarded with contempt, by soldiers accustomed to the operations of regular service. This example of breaking the independent power of the barons was followed by the politic Henry VII, of England. He undermined that edifice, which it was

not prudent to attack with open force. By judicious laws he permitted his nobles to break the entail of their estates, and to expose them to sale. He prohibited them from keeping numerous bands of retainers, which had rendered them formidable to his predecessors. By encouraging agriculture and commerce, and all the arts of peace during a long reign, and by enforcing a vigorous and impartial execution of the laws, he not only removed many immediate evils resulting from the feudal system, but provided against their future return. The influence of his salutary plans was gradually felt, and they contributed more and more, in process of time to the good order, prosperity, and general welfare of his subjects.

## II. THE CRUSADES.

Few expeditions are more extraordinary than those which were undertaken by the crusaders, for the recovery of the Holy Land out of the power of the Turks. If we consider the great numbers of Europeans who were engaged in them, or their long and obstinate perseverance in the same design, notwithstanding an almost uninterrupted series of hardships, losses, and defeats; and if we reflect upon the important consequences with which these events were attended, both to themselves and their descendants; the history of the crusades, including a period of one hundred and seventy-five years, from A. D. 1095 to 1270, will be found to merit very particular regard, and to follow in proper order our survey of the feudal system.

From the æra of the crusades may be traced the diffusion of several kinds of knowledge, and the various improvements of society in manners, commerce and

arts. And from the communication of the western with the eastern nations arose a succession of causes, which with different degrees of influence, and with more or less rapidity, contributed to abolish anarchy and confusion, and to introduce order and improvement into society.

Judea, or the Holy Land, was the highest object of veneration to the christians of the middle ages. There had lived the Son of God; there he had performed the most astonishing miracles; and there he had suffered death for the sins of the world. His holy sepulchre was preserved at Jerusalem; and as a degree of veneration was annexed to this consecrated place, nearly approaching to idolatry, a visit to it was regarded as the most meritorious service which could be paid to heaven; and it was eagerly frequented by crowds of pilgrims from every part of Europe. If it be natural to the human mind to survey those spots which have been the abodes of illustrious persons, or the scenes of great transactions, with delight and veneration, what must have been the ardour with which the christians of those times, the ruling passion of whose mind was religious enthusiasm, regarded a country which the Almighty had selected as the residence of his chosen people, and the place where his Son had shed his precious blood, to expiate the sins, and accomplish the redemption of mankind? The zealous travellers to Palestine were long exposed to the insults, extortions, and cruelty of the ferocious and hostile Infidels: but at length their complaints roused the Europeans to attempt their expulsion. Peter surnamed the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, was the first mover of this great project\*. Armed with the authority of

\* A. D. 1095 to 1099. Gibbon, vol. vi, cap. 53, &c. Robertson's Charles V, vol. i, p. 292, &c. History of Modern Europe



Pope Urban II, he traversed the countries of Europe, and with rude but pathetic eloquence described the injuries he had received in his pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre. He quickly kindled the ardour of persons of all ranks. The first converts to this active missionary became the warmest advocates for the expedition. Great numbers, chiefly consisting of peasants, ill-provided with necessaries, and whose ignorance magnified the hopes and diminished the dangers of the undertaking, perished in the forests of Hungary, or the plains of Asia. A pyramid of bones, erected by Solyman, the emperor of the Turks, near the city of Nice, informed their followers of the place of their defeat. Of the first crusaders three hundred thousand are said to have fallen a sacrifice to their fanaticism, before a single city was rescued from the infidels. More strongly stimulated, rather than deterred by this catastrophe, Baldwin, earl of Flanders; Godfrey of Bouillon; Hugh, count of Vermandois, brother to the King of France; Raymond, count of Thoulouse; Robert, duke of Normandy, the eldest son of William the Conqueror; Bohemond and Tancred, who were likewise princes of the Norman race, set forth upon this enterprise: all were chiefs of high renown, famed for their prowess in arms, and stimulated by the same intrepid and fanatical spirit. They were followed by their numerous adherents and vassals, whose services were either prompted by zeal and attachment to their respective lords, or purchased with rewards and promises.\*

vol. i, letter 24, &c. Introduction to the Literary History of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Rapin, vol. i, p. 244, &c.

\* "The crusaders wore a cross most commonly on their shoulders in gold, or silk, or cloth, sewed on their garments. In the first crusade, all were red; in the third, the French alone

Constantinople was at that time the largest as well as the most beautiful city in Europe. It alone retained the image of ancient elegance in manners and in arts. It was the place where manufactures of the most curious fabric were wrought. It was the mart of Europe for all the commodities of the East, and the seat of empire, elegance, and magnificence. Such was the place appointed as a general rendezvous for all the crusaders. Several contemporary writers were witnesses to this singular assembly of different nations; and they give a lively picture of the characters and manners of each people. When the polite natives of the metropolis of the East speak of the northern warriors, they describe them as barbarous, illiterate, fierce, and savage; and they sometimes inveigh against them with great violence, and relate instances of their ferocity and devastation in terms not unlike those, which preceding historians had employed in describing the incursions of the Goths and Vandals, when they overturned the Roman empire. But on the other hand, the crusaders, while they despised the effeminate manners and unwarlike character of the Greeks, were surprised at the wealth and magnificence of their metropolis.

After suffering various hardships and losses, the crusaders at length reached the walls of Jerusalem.

preserved that colour, while green crosses were adopted by the Flemings, and white by the English." Gibbon, vol. vi, p. 8. "The cross was inscribed by some zealots on their skin; a hot iron, or indelible liquor, was applied to perpetuate the mark." Idem, p. 17.

"Armorial bearings were invented to reward merit, and distinguish families; and the science of heraldry may be traced back to Palestine." Introd. to the Hist. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Forty days were employed in the siege of the holy city: at the expiration of which they took it by assault: and forgetful of the lessons of mercy taught by their great master, whose ensign they bore, they indulged in the rage of promiscuous slaughter, and put all the Jews and Turks, of every age, and of either sex, to the sword. The events which happened during this romantic expedition, and the heroic exploits performed by the champions of the Cross, and their Mahometan foes, furnish the subject of the celebrated poem of Tasso, the most pleasing memorial which is left to us of this enterprise. Godfrey of Bouillon, the most worthy of the heroes of Christendom, was proclaimed king of Jerusalem. In imitation of his Saviour he was crowned with thorns; he rejected the appendages of royalty, and contented himself with the modest title of Defender, and Baron of the holy sepulchre. (A. D. 1099.) His companions, with the exception only of the gallant Tancred and his adherents, returned to Europe: after whose departure the Turks insulted the garrison of Jerusalem: and the short reign of Godfrey, which continued only for one year, did not give him time to secure the stability of his new kingdom. In vain did the knights of the hospital of St. John, and of the temple of Solomon, who in their associations blended the discipline of a monastic with the hardships of a military life, endeavour to support the tottering throne of Baldwin, his successor. Surrounded by the exasperated and restless Mahometans, he was compelled to solicit a reinforcement from the kingdoms of Europe for the support of his declining power.

The fruits reaped in this first crusade ill repaid its great loss and expense, and were comprised within the little territory of Jerusalem, the dominion of which

was bounded by the term of four-score years. The holy war, however, continued to be recommended in the letters of the Pope, and the sermons of the clergy, with unabated ardour and zeal. It was still represented to the people as the cause of God and of Christ, in which death would confer the merit of martyrdom, and paradise would be equally the reward of defeat, or of victory.

St. Bernard, famed for his eloquence and enthusiastic piety, and the great influence which he obtained amongst the people, flourished at the beginning of the twelfth century. Armed with the authority of Pope Eugene III he rekindled the expiring flame of military fanaticism. With a voice that was in every place, obeyed without delay he called the nations to the protection of the holy sepulchre. The fame of his pretended miracles and predictions removed every doubt of success from the minds of his credulous hearers; inasmuch that all who were able to bear arms were eager to participate the glory of the pious warfare. Bernard was invited to become a leader in the expedition which he so zealously recommended; but he prudently declined an appointment which would eventually have exposed him to the ridicule, and probably to the resentment of his followers. He was more fortunate in advancing the interests of the church than in the success of his projects, or the fulfilment of his predictions. The court of Rome profited by his labours and canonized his memory. Conrad III, emperor of Germany, and Louis VII, king of France, were the principal agents in the second crusade. (A. D. 1147.) From the hands of Bernard they received the cross, with assurances that he had authority from heaven to promise them victory. Their cavalry was composed of one hundred and forty thousand knights, and their imme-

diate attendants; and if even the light-armed troops, the women and children, the priests and monks, be excluded from the computation of their effective forces, their number will arise to four hundred thousand souls. The fatal errors of their predecessors suggested the safer expedient of a voyage, in preference to a march into Palestine; and the sea-ports of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice, were from this time frequented by the crusaders for that purpose. In the Italian states they found more cultivated manners, and greater knowledge, than their own countries could boast; so that in them, as well as in the metropolis of the East, the most striking examples of civilization and refinement were furnished to these rude adventurers.

The event of this enterprise proved still more disastrous to the cause of the crusaders than their first expedition. Manuel, the emperor of the Greeks, is accused by his own subjects of giving intelligence of their plans to the Turkish Sultan, and of providing them with treacherous guides. The conduct of the Christian leaders was dictated by no sound policy, or vigorous co-operation. Instead of crushing the common foe by a preconcerted attack at the same time on different sides of his territories, Louis of France had scarcely passed the Bosphorus, when he was met by the returning emperor who had lost the greatest part of his army in a battle on the banks of the Meander. The king of France advanced through the same country to a similar fate; and was glad to shelter the relics of his army in the sea-port of Satalia. At Jerusalem these unfortunate monarchs met to lament their sad reverses of fortune. Their martial trains, the slender remnants of mighty armies, were joined to the Christian powers of Syria; and a fruitless siege of *Damascus* was the final effort of the second crusade.

The third, undertaken by Frederic Barbarossa, emperor of Germany, and the kings of England and France, was most remarkable for the victories of Saladin, the temperate, brave, and generous chief of the Saracens. His pretensions to commendation and renown were much better founded than those of Philip of France, and Richard Cœur de Lion. His life exhibited a series of actions which his rivals in arms would have done well to have imitated, and which, far from disgracing, would have reflected honour upon the profession of a Christian. He appears not to have been deficient either in literature or science; and, in the progress of his conquests, he respected the arts. When he retook Jerusalem he treated his captives not only with clemency, but even with kindness. We must not, however, deprive Richard of England of his due praise for military prowess, as he displayed, upon all occasions of danger and enterprise, the most heroic courage. He took the city of Acre, a place which has in our own times been the scene of the undaunted valour and steady perseverance of the natives of Britain; and among other spoils, esteemed of inestimable value in an age of gross superstition, he recovered some of the wood which was said to belong to the cross of Christ. The bravery of Richard continued for many years to be proverbial in the East; his terrific name was used by the Syrian mother to silence the refractory child, and by the rider to check the starting horse. The perfidious conduct of Philip of France, in taking advantage of the absence of Richard to invade his territories in Normandy, in direct violation of his solemn oath, obliged him to conclude a truce with Saladin, who was allowed to retain possession of Jerusalem, on condition that the holy sepulchre should be

open to the visits of Christian pilgrims without molestation or tribute. When the treaty was concluded the English monarch informed Saladin that he might depend upon his return to try once more to recover the Holy Land. The Sultan, with a politeness which would have done honour to the most refined age, replied that if it must be his misfortune to lose that part of his dominions, he had rather it should be to the king of England than to any other monarch in the world. (Rapin, vol. i, p. 252, fol.) The gallant Richard embarked for Europe to endure a long captivity, and find an early grave; and the space of a few months after his departure from the Holy Land terminated the life of Saladin.

Historians have recorded the details of no less than *seven* different crusades, including a period of an hundred and seventy-five years; in which time numerous armies were led to disgrace the Christian name in the East. The two last crusades were undertaken by Louis the ninth, king of France, whose fleet conveyed a well-appointed and numerous army to the coasts of Egypt; (A. D. 1248:) and there, after an ineffectual display of valour, he was made prisoner, with the greatest part of his nobles. All who could not redeem their lives at an excessive ransom, were massacred by the barbarous Mahometans, and the walls of Cairo were covered with Christian heads. The king of France was loaded with chains; but his deliverance, with that of many of his soldiers, was obtained by the restitution of Damietta, and the payment of an immense sum of gold. After sixteen years of repose this enterprising and bigotted monarch again embarked from France, and undertook the wild project of baptizing the king of Tunis. (A. D. 1270.) On the barren sands of

Africa his army exhausted by fatigue, and sinking under the influence of a burning climate, was quickly reduced to inconsiderable numbers. Louis expired in his tent; and at the moment of his death his son and successor gave the signal for retreat.

After the loss of Jerusalem the city of Acre, from which it is distant about 70 miles, became the metropolis of the Latin Christians. There the different powers of Europe, and the masters of the Hospital, the Temple, and the Teutonic order, assumed an independent command over a promiscuous multitude of pilgrims and fugitives. To avenge the plunder of some Mahometan villages, and the murder of some Syrian merchants, the sultan Khalil besieged and stormed it, and 60,000 Christians were doomed to death or captivity. The loss of Acre was in fact the loss of the Holy Land; and the memorable year 1291 terminated the folly, fanaticism, and unprofitable valour of the Christians in the crusades.

That these wars were upon the whole disastrous and unfortunate can be no subject of surprise, when we consider the manners and the dispositions of those who engaged in them, and the difficulties with which they were obliged to contend. Actuated by romantic fervour, and confident of victory, their plans were always uniform; and, in their subsequent expeditions, they rarely profited by the miscarriage of those that preceded. Jealous and vindictive, they agreed only in wearing the badge of the Cross, and were torn by intestine divisions and feuds: they therefore never co-operated with perfect cordiality, when they reached the field of action. Depredation and bloodshed marked their steps in the countries through which they passed; and they roused the vengeance, instead of conciliating



the affections, of the Christian Greeks, as well as of the Mahometan Syrians.

The remoteness of Palestine from Europe, and the nature of the climate, ought likewise not to be disregarded. The crusaders, whether they marched by way of Constantinople, or embarked from the ports of Italy, if we consider their total inexperience in remote expeditions, must have been greatly diminished in numbers, and weakened by fatigue, before they reached the field of action. The burning heat of Syria, the want of provisions, the scarcity of water, and the consequent diseases must have deprived them of much of that energy and vigour so essentially necessary to their success. They were opposed by intrepid and active foes, as enthusiastic in the cause of their Prophet as the Christians were in behalf of their Redeemer; acting in concert, superior in the various arts of war, fighting in their own country, and able to avail themselves of all its advantages and resources.

These wars display in the strongest light the influence of the Papal power. The pontiffs summoned the princes of Europe to arms, sent them to conquer new kingdoms, in order to enlarge the dominions of the holy see, regulated even beyond the boundaries of the ocean the conduct of kings and emperors, and thus exercised a supreme and universal sovereignty.

If we endeavour to trace the various causes which led to the crusades, we shall find that the opinions, manners, and prejudices of the Europeans of the middle ages, all conspired to precipitate them into these enterprizes, without any consideration of the injustice, inhumanity, or impolicy of their conduct.

Vain would it have been for any enlightened christian at that time to have urged, in order to quench the

flame of fanaticism, and spare the effusion of blood, that the crusaders had no right to wrest Judea from the hands of its possessors; and that their zeal for the recovery of Bethlehem, the place where the Son of God was born, or Mount Calvary, where he was crucified, could not justify their violation of the moral precepts of his Gospel. To such arguments as these the superstitious would not have listened; the cause was too deeply implicated with their darling passions and prejudices, to be decided by an appeal to sober reason, or the genuine dictates of christianity.

Their religious enthusiasm was greatly augmented by their passion for war. Commerce, manufactures, and arts, were at that time, if considered as general and national, occupations in a state of infancy, and the mass of the people were destitute of regular employment. They caught with eagerness at any occasion which relieved them from a state of inactivity, and afforded room for the indulgence of their favourite inclinations. In the time of the crusades chivalry began to flourish; and those knights who were inspired with a romantic desire to travel in quest of adventures, turned their eyes with eagerness to Asia, which promised to open such new scenes of enterprise and glory as could not be found in Europe. Persons of inferior rank flattered themselves with the most sanguine expectations of conquest, were confident that victory would attend their steps, and that they should return home loaded with the spoils of the East.

Such was the origin of this spirit of enterprise. The great privileges and immunities granted to the crusaders may serve to account for its long continuance in Europe. The Popes proclaimed a complete *indulgence* and pardon for crimes to every one who

acuteness of observation, an active and imitative spirit, and a great energy of character. In the course of their expedition they acquired a taste for the arts and sciences; and the example of the Arabian and Syrian merchants taught them the value of trade, and the use of several manufactures. In the superior refinements of Cairo and Constantinople they discovered various commodities worth importing into Europe. From this period is dated the introduction of silk and sugar, which were conveyed into Italy from Greece and Egypt; and the advantages which resulted from a more enlarged and adventurous traffic to the Pisans, the Genoese, and the Venetians, who laid the foundation of the modern commercial system. The crusaders began that intercourse with the East, which under the pacific forms of commerce has continued with little interruption ever since. On their return to Europe they introduced a new taste in buildings, a more superb display of magnificence on public occasions, the rich manufactures of Asia, together with a more romantic spirit of enterprise, and the first improvements in learning and science.

The most beneficial effects of the crusades were visible in the alteration which they occasioned in the state of property, by the emancipation of vassals from the tyranny of their lords, and by increasing the growing independence of the feudal tenants. Many of the great barons, unable to support the expenses incurred by their expeditions to Palestine, sold their hereditary possessions. The monarchs of different countries took advantage of these opportunities of annexing considerable territories to their dominions, and purchased them at a small expense. The fiefs likewise of those barons who died in the holy wars without heirs

reverted to their respective sovereigns; and by these possessions being taken from one scale, and thrown into the other, the regal power increased in proportion as that of the nobility declined. The great cities of Italy which had begun to turn their attention towards commerce, were impatient to shake off the yoke of their insolent lords, and to establish such a government as would make property secure, and the exercise of industry safe and easy. They purchased or extorted large immunities and grants from the emperors of Germany; and other countries, particularly France, followed their example. The great barons were eager to lay hold of this new expedient for raising money by the sales of charters of independence and enfranchisement to the towns within their domains; and, in order to procure immediate relief for their exigencies, they disregarded the consequences which might result from the establishment and the ascendancy of municipal power. Thus commenced the privileges granted to corporations, and the rights acquired by communities of citizens. The benefits which accrued to the public at large by these concessions, were of the highest importance, as they were favourable to regularity and good order, to the extension of freedom, and the exertions of diligence, the more exact and uniform administration of justice, and the comfort and happiness of the inferior classes of society. Thus we may observe the beneficial effects of the crusades, in producing a new order of things, and erecting the first strong and durable barrier against the licentiousness, rapine, discord, and tyranny of the Feudal system.

### III. THE INSTITUTION OF CHIVALRY.

Although the extravagancies of knight errantry, and the marvellous and incredible stories related in the old romances of the Seven Champions of Christendom, Sir Launcelot, Amadis de Gaul, King Arthur, and the noble Knights of the Round Table, who went forth in search of adventures into all parts of the world, have been made the entertaining subjects of burlesque description, particularly in the well-known works of Cervantes, Rabelais, and Butler; yet we must not mistake imaginary for real chivalry.\* The former existed only in the old romances, and as such was the object at which these celebrated writers aimed their successful ridicule and satire: but we shall find, on examining the origin and progress of the latter, that it was a noble and a beneficial institution, the result of an enlightened policy, considering the times in which it was established; that it increased the glory of the nations in which it flourished; it enabled the nobility and gentry of Europe to resist the military enthusiasm of the Saracens and Turks; and had a very powerful effect in alleviating the evils of the feudal system, and refining the manners of the higher ranks of society. In times when robbery, oppression, barbarity, and licentiousness, prevailed in most of the countries of Europe, it supplied in many instances, although imperfectly, the

\* "The Duke d'Alva said that Don Quixote would ruin Spain; though in truth the ridicule of that ingenious book is not pointed against the spirit of chivalry, but against the absurd representation of it in the Spanish romances."

Lord Lyttelton's *Henry II*, vol. iii, p. 54.

place of law ; and in the hands of valour, was the instrument of humanity and justice.

If chivalry be considered only as a simple ceremony by which the noble youths who were destined for war received their first arms, the custom was known among the ancient Germans and was established in France in the reign of Charlemagne, at the commencement of the ninth century. That emperor sent to Aquitain for his son Louis, and presented him with a sword, and all the equipage of a warrior. William of Malmesbury mentions that about the same time king Alfred presented his grandson Athelston with a sword, and a rich belt with a crimson robe, as the ensigns of knighthood. But if we look upon chivalry as a dignity which gave the first military rank, and which was conferred by a particular kind of investiture, attended with appropriate ceremonies, and ratified by a solemn oath, it would be difficult to trace it to a more remote period than the eleventh century.\*

France claims the honour of giving this institution its specific character at the time when that kingdom was recovering from the disorders which followed the extinction of the second race of its monarchs. The royal authority began again to be respected, laws were enacted, corporations were founded, and the numerous fiefs held by the great barons under the crown, were governed with greater regularity. It was in this state of affairs, that the sovereigns and the great lords were

\* *Memoires sur l'ancienne Chevalerie* par de la Carne de St. Palaye. *Academ. des Inscriptions*, tom. xx, p. 597, &c. The ingenious dialogue "on Chivalry and Romance," by the Bishop of Worcester, led me to this copious source of information, from which I have derived the greatest part of my statement. See Warton on Spenser, and Lyttelton's *Henry II*, vol. ii, p. 232.

desirous of strengthening the feudal ties by adding to the ceremony of doing homage, that of giving arms to their young vassals, previous to their first military expeditions. It is highly probable, that by conferring the same honourable distinction upon other persons, who did not hold any lands under them, but who offered their services from motives of esteem, or the desire of military renown, the sovereigns and great barons availed themselves of this expedient to secure the co-operation of new warriors, who were ready to follow their standard upon all occasions, when they could only rely upon their own dependants to serve them in certain districts for a limited time. They received with joy these brave volunteers, who, by increasing their forces, gave additional strength to their power; and as every knight had the privilege of creating other knights, the sovereign exercised, without exciting jealousy, a privilege, which he possessed in common with others. Every gentleman who was designed for the profession of arms was trained by a long preparatory course of discipline and service in some noble family, and was during his youth the companion of some warrior of renown. The ceremonies which attended his knighthood were solemn and impressive. They combined the rights of religion with the forms of feudal duty; and resembled the mode of admitting a proselyte into the church, as well as that of a vassal doing homage for a fief. The candidate for this distinction, accompanied by his sponsors and his priest, passed the night previous to his initiation in watching his arms, and in the duties of prayer. The next morning he repaired to the bath, the water of which was intended to serve as an emblem of the purity of his profession. He then walked to the nearest church clothed in white garments,

and presented his sword to the minister officiating at the altar, who returned it to him with his benediction. After taking the accustomed oaths to his sovereign, or feudal chief, he was invested by the attendant knights and ladies with certain parts of his armour. He was first presented with gilt spurs,\* a coat of mail, and gauntlets; and lastly he was begirt with a sword. The sovereign then rising from the throne conferred upon him, whilst kneeling, the honour of knighthood, by giving him three strokes with the flat part of a drawn sword upon his shoulders or neck. He then saluted the young warrior, and pronounced these words: "In the name of God, of St. Michael, and St. George, I make thee a knight: be brave, bold, and loyal." His horse and the remaining part of his armour were afterwards presented to him, and the ceremony was concluded with a costly banquet. Palaye, p. 666, &c.

Important and numerous were the privileges attached to this profession of arms, and its duties were at once arduous and indispensable. To protect the ladies was an essential part of them. Incapable of taking arms for the preservation of their property, and destitute of the means to prove the purity of their characters, if attacked by malevolence or slander, they would frequently in those uncivilized times, when law and justice were silenced by violence and force, have seen their lands become a prey to some tyrannical neighbour, or have their reputation blasted by the breath of calumny, if some knight had not come forward in their defence. To the succour of the distressed, the protection of

\* "Esquires were not allowed to wear any gold in their dress, although knights were from hence, as well as from wearing gilt spurs, distinguished by the name of *Equites Aurati*."

Lord Lyttelton, Hen. II, v. 2, p. 236.



orphans, the emancipation of captives, and the chastisement of oppression, he likewise dedicated his sword, and his life. If he failed in a scrupulous attention to these benevolent offices, he was looked upon as deserting the most solemn obligations, and was degraded from his rank with public marks of disgrace. If he performed them with activity and spirit, he was regarded as an honour to his profession, and his renown was spread over every part of Europe.

In the character of a true knight during the golden age of chivalry we behold an assemblage of virtues which command our esteem and admiration, and confer the most honourable distinction upon human nature. His air was noble, his deportment manly, and his manners condescending and gracious to all. His promise was inviolable and sacred; and he chastised that falsehood in others, which was the peculiar object of his abhorrence. His love of arms was softened by the refinements of courtesy, the fair offspring of that high-born and noble society, which he enjoyed in the castles of the great. His professions of attachment and service were invariably sincere; and all his actions were dictated by courage, and guided by honour. He was as ambitious to render his name illustrious by affability, probity, generosity and benevolence, as by the extent and number of his expeditions, trophies, and victories. By such conduct were those knights signalized, whom their contemporaries celebrated as the fairest ornaments of chivalry, and whose renown has been transmitted through all succeeding ages. Such were Edward the black prince, the Chevalier Bayard, and Sir Philip Sidney.

*Edward the black prince* was accomplished, valiant, and amiable. One anecdote of his behaviour will be

sufficient to prove, that he was as moderate in the use of victory; as he was great in obtaining it. "Soon after the glorious battle of Poitiers, in 1356, he landed at Southwark, and was met by a great concourse of people of all ranks and stations. His prisoner, John, King of France, was clad in royal apparel, and mounted on a white steed, distinguished by its size and beauty, and by the richness of its furniture. The conqueror rode by his side in meaner attire, and carried by a black palfrey. In this situation, more glorious than all the insolent parade of a Roman triumph, he passed through the streets of London, and presented the King of France to his father, who received him with the same courtesy, as if he had been a neighbouring potentate that had voluntarily come to pay him a friendly visit. It is impossible, on reflecting on this noble conduct, not to perceive the advantages which resulted from the otherwise whimsical principles of chivalry, and which gave, even in those rude times, some superiority even over people of a more cultivated age and nation." Hume, vol. iii, p. 460.

The *Chevalier Bayard*, the valorous and distinguished companion of Charles the 8th, Louis the 12th, and Francis the 1st, in their wars, flourished at the beginning of the 16th century. After taking the city of Bresse he received a large sum from his host for saving his house from being plundered. Of this money he generously made a present to his two daughters who brought it. In the following winter he was quartered at Grenoble, near a young lady of good family, but of indigent circumstances: her beauty inflamed his love, and her situation gave him hopes of being able to gratify it. Her mother, urged by poverty, accepted *his proposals*, and compelled her reluctant daughter to

visit him. As soon as she was introduced into his presence she threw herself at his feet, and with streaming eyes besought him not to dishonour an unfortunate damsel whom it was more consistent with a person of his virtuous character to protect. "Rise," exclaimed the Chevalier, "you shall quit this place as innocent as you entered it, but more fortunate." He instantly conducted her home, reproved her mother, and gave the daughter a marriage portion of 600 pistoles. This conquest he gained over himself at the age of twenty-six, when in the situation of the great Scipio Africanus, he was most exposed to temptation, as "juvenis, et cœlebs, et victor." At the battle of Marignan against the Swiss, in 1515, he fought by the side of Francis I, and so impressed was that monarch with the high opinion of his prowess, that he received from his hand the honour of knighthood. Being once asked what possessions a nobleman had best leave to his son, he replied, "such as are least exposed to the power of time or human force—*Wisdom and Virtue*." At the retreat of the French at Rebec he received a mortal wound, and with his last breath requested his Esquire to inform the King, "that the only regret he felt on leaving the world was that he could serve him no longer." He then requested to be placed under a tree facing the enemy, and then expired. He was called the "Knight without fear and without reproach," and no one could have a better claim to so excellent a character.

*Sir Philip Sidney*, descended from John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland by the mother's side, was born at Penshurst, in Kent, 1554, and died at the age of 32. During his education at Shrewsbury and Oxford he made an astonishing proficiency in all branches of

learning. His conduct was upon all occasions such as to do honour to a true Knight. He could not brook the least affront, even from persons of the highest rank, as he proved by his spirited behaviour to the haughty Earl of Oxford, a nobleman very high in the favour of Queen Elizabeth. This quarrel occasioned his retirement from court, during which he wrote his Romance called *Arcadia*, which he dedicated to his sister the countess of Pembroke. At the grand tournament held in 1581, for the entertainment of Anjou, when he came to London to solicit the Queen in marriage, Sir Philip went through his feats of arms with great ability, and gained singular commendation. Such was his fame for relieving all who were in distress that when the Spaniards had seized the kingdom of Portugal, Don Antonio, the chief competitor for the crown, applied to him for his assistance. He was appointed Governor of Flushing, one of the towns delivered by the Dutch to the Queen, and in several actions with the enemy behaved with extraordinary courage, and with such mature judgment as would have done credit to the most experienced commanders. His high renown and great deserts were so well known throughout Europe that he was put in nomination for the crown of Poland upon the death of Stephen Batori, but the Queen refused to further his promotion. On the 22d of September, 1586, being sent out to intercept a convoy that was advancing to Zutphen, he fell into an ambuscade, and received a fatal wound in the thigh. In his sad progress from the field of battle, passing by the rest of the army, where his uncle, Robert Earl of Leicester was, and being thirsty with excessive loss of blood, he called for drink, which was soon brought him: but as he was putting the

bottle to his mouth he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had been wounded at the same time, eagerly fixing his eyes upon it. As soon as Sir Philip perceived his inclination he delivered the bottle to him with these words, "Thy necessity is greater than mine." This action discovered a disposition so tender, a mind so fortified against pain, a heart so overflowing with generosity to relieve distress in opposition to the most urgent call of his own necessities, that none can read a detail of it without the highest admiration. Finding himself past all hope of recovery, he prepared for death with the greatest composure, and assembled the clergymen of divers nations, before whom he made a full confession of his christian faith. The closing scene of his life was the parting with his brother, Sir Robert Sidney, of whom he took leave in these words, "Love my memory, cherish my friends; their faith to me may assure you they are sincere: but above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of the world with all her vanities." As he had been during his life beloved, admired, and almost idolized by all ranks of men, so was his death most deeply lamented. He was the fairest flower of Chivalry, the bright jewel of an illustrious court, and a pattern of superior excellence, even in an age of heroes.\*

A knight was always known by a device on his shield, and the peculiarities of his blazonry, which were allusive to some of his martial exploits. Great honours were paid to him after his decease, particularly if he was slain in battle. His funeral was most

\* Lord Lyttelton's Life of Hen. II, v. 8, p. 54. Biographia Brit. Article Sidney, &c.

solemn, and very fully attended. His sword, helmet, spurs, gauntlets, and armorial ensigns, were suspended over the hallowed spot of his interment, or his cenotaph. His splendid tomb, graced with his effigy, and marked with a suitable inscription, was considered as a tribute of the justest respect to his virtues, and as a powerful incentive to inflame the youthful warrior to tread the same path of valour and renown.

Chivalry was indebted to religion for much of the ardour with which its votaries were animated. Such was the superstition of the times that no institution of a public nature could have obtained reputation in the world, which was not consecrated by the church, and closely interwoven with the religious opinions of the times. To the incentives of zeal were added the spirit of gallantry, and a romantic attachment to the fair sex. The youthful knight, previous to his going forth upon any warlike expedition, devoted himself to the service of some lady, who was usually the object of his ardent love. It was his most lively hope that her smiles and her hand would reward his valour: he bore her device upon his arms; to her he consecrated his trophies; and to gain her favour and approbation he was ready upon all occasions to meet danger, and shed his blood. This passion was the keenest incitement that was given to his heroic actions, and fired his mind with unabating enthusiasm. Amid foreign invasion or domestic feuds, where the opposing barons and their vassals encountered each other in the hottest engagements, the faithful knight, as he couched his lance, and rushed to meet the foe, invoked the mistress of his heart, and gloried by his achievements to render himself worthy of her regard. When peace brought a short interval of repose, and rival knights contended

in the jousts and tournaments, the applauding lady often adjudged the prizes to the victorious champions, and rewarded the valour which she had inspired. In the lofty hall decked with banners and trophies of war, when the banquet was given to the jocund train of nobles, and their gallant companions in arms, the harp and the songs of the minstrel resounded the praises of the fair; and every pageant and celebrity concurred to keep the mind in the same direction to its beloved object.

The ambition of pleasing a favourite lady, and of being worthy to be considered as her champion in the field of battle, as well as in the tournaments, was a motive which stimulated a knight to the most daring actions, and animated him with the most determined valour. Many instances are recorded in the history of the middle ages, of the height to which this romantic gallantry arose. (Palaye, p. 653.) It was not unusual for a knight in the midst of a battle or a siege, to challenge his enemy to single combat, and refer to the decision of arms the transcendent beauty of their ladies.

We have before taken occasion to observe that the treatment of women in Greece and Rome was harsh and degrading. They were confined to a state of seclusion from the world, had few attentions paid to them, and were allowed to take little share in the general intercourse of life. The northern nations, on the contrary, paid a kind of religious veneration to the female sex, considered them as endowed with superior and even divine qualities, gave them a seat in their public councils, and followed their standard to battle. These fierce barbarians in the course of their ravages in the Roman empire, when they involved the monuments of ancient art in destruction, and pursued their

enemies in arms with the most bloody severity, always forbore to offer violence to women. They introduced into the west of Europe the respectful gallantry of the north; and this benevolence of sentiment was cherished and matured by the institution of chivalry.\* Woman, instead of having only a retired place in society, was brought forward into the most conspicuous point of view; she became the umpire of valour, the arbitress of victory, and at once the incentive and the reward of courageous actions. Naturally elated at beholding the power of her charms, she became worthy of the heroism which she inspired, improved in the dignity of her character, and formed her sentiments upon the pure principles of honour. The distinguished prowess of the knight was counterbalanced by the strict and spotless chastity of the lady, and these virtues long continued to countenance and to reward each other: they were encouraged by the modes, the habits, and the circumstances of the times, and found ample room for growth and expansion in the baronial states.

Thus it appears that in the institution of chivalry were blended valour, humanity, justice, honour, courtesy, and gallantry. Their combined effects were soon visible upon the manners of a martial age. The horrors of war were softened when humanity began to be esteemed the ornament of knighthood. More condescension and more affability were introduced, when courtesy was recommended as the most amiable of knightly virtues. A rigid adherence to truth, with the most religious attention to every engagement, became the distinguishing characteristic of every gentle-

\* Robertson's *Charles V.*, vol. i, p. 82, &c. *Modern Europe*, vol. ii, p. 208, &c.



man, because chivalry was regarded as the school of honour. It is the remark of the excellent historian to whose works I confess myself under singular obligations in pursuing this and similar inquiries, "that, perhaps, the *humanity* which accompanies all the operations of war, the *refinements of gallantry*, and the *point of honour*, the three chief circumstances, which distinguish modern from ancient manners, may be attributed in a great measure to this whimsical institution." Robertson's Charles V, vol. i, p. 85.

The classical reader cannot fail to be struck with the coincidence in the political state of ancient Greece, as described by Homer, and the condition of the feudal times. The military ardour of the heroes is similar to that of the barons. What are the Grecian Bacchus, Hercules, and Jason, wandering over various parts of the world in search of adventures, and conquering giants and monsters, but knights-errant, and the exact counterparts of Sir Launcelot, and Amadis de Gaul, and the Seven Champions of Christendom? Courage, generosity, courtesy and hospitality, were the virtues common to them all.

The dispositions and sentiments which chivalry produced were so deeply rooted that they continued to predominate long after its spirit had evaporated, and the institution had become an object of neglect and ridicule. Generosity and a love of enterprize, the qualities to which it owed its birth, when once directed to objects that interested the affections, were not likely to be short in their duration, or partial in their effects. The refined assiduities of men naturally directed the attention of women to themselves, as well as to their admirers; and this circumstance produced a gradual improvement in female education. The

men, quitting the formality of the feudal times, and the hyperbolical style of making love, of which many curious instances may be found in the old romances, became less artificial in their compliments, and softer in their manners. Women became sensible of the importance of improving their minds, and of heightening the charms of nature with elegant accomplishments, and the graces of affability and complaisance.

Thus has a great change of manners been effected, by following up a leading principle of the institution of chivalry, and giving a conspicuous place to the female sex in the ranks of society. The passion of love, purified by delicacy, has been heightened by the pleasures of sentiment and imagination; the sphere of conversation has been enlarged and meliorated; it has gained more propriety, more vivacity, more wit, and more variety; social intercourse has been divested of formality, and is regulated by the laws of true politeness. It has opened new sources of satisfaction to the understanding, and afforded new delights to the heart. The merit of the sexes has been raised, they have become better entitled to the esteem of each other; the characters both of men and women have been marked by more amiable qualities, and the stock of refined pleasures and social happiness has been very considerably increased.

#### IV. THE REFORMATION OF RELIGION.

There is perhaps no occurrence recorded in the annals of mankind, since the first publication of Christianity, which has had so considerable an influence in vindicating the rights of conscience, in liberating the powers of the mind from the tyranny of superstition,

and in the promotion of general knowledge, as the reformation of religion in the sixteenth century. Previous to this auspicious event all Europe bowed beneath the yoke of the Church of Rome, and trembled at the name of her sovereigns. The laws which were issued from the Vatican held emperors, kings, and all their subjects, in the chains of obedience, or rather of slavery; and to resist their authority, or to examine their reasonableness, required a vigour of understanding, and an energy of character, of which for many ages few examples were to be found. Waldus in the twelfth century, Wickliff in the fourteenth, and Huss in the fifteenth, had inveighed against the errors of Popery with great boldness, and exposed them with great ingenuity: but their attempts to instruct the minds of the ignorant and illiterate were premature and ineffectual. Such feeble lights, incapable of dispelling the thick darkness, which enveloped the Church, were soon extinguished: at length, however, it was the gracious act of Providence to raise up MARTIN LUTHER, as the chosen instrument of its auspicious designs. See Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. ii, p. 41, 4th ed.

This great Reformer was born of poor parents at Eisleben in Saxony.\* He received a learned education, and in his youth discovered great acuteness and vigour of understanding. He first devoted himself to a monastic life in a convent of Augustinian friars, and afterward was appointed by Frederic, elector of Saxony, professor of philosophy and theology in the new university of Wittemberg. Having found a copy of the Bible, which had long been neglected, in the library of

\* Born 1483. His opinions widely diffused in 1518. Died 1546, aged 63 years.

his convent, he abandoned all other pursuits, and devoted himself to the study of the Scriptures. The pure light of revelation beamed upon his mind; he saw that christianity was not to be learned from the writings of the schoolmen, or the decrees of general councils, but from the authority of the sacred writings alone. An opportunity was soon afforded him of showing his zeal for truth, and his ardour for its propagation. The Dominican monks were at that time employed by pope Leo X to sell indulgences for all offences and crimes, for the purpose of recruiting his exhausted treasury. Luther, with great boldness of manner, and strength of argument, preached against the irregularity of their lives, and the vicious tendency of their doctrines; and he represented to the people the extreme danger of relying for salvation on any other means than those appointed by the word of God. The more he examined the claims of the Church of Rome to its empire over the reason and conscience of mankind, the more he ascertained their weakness. The discovery of one error naturally led him to the detection of others; and from refuting the extravagant tenets concerning indulgences, he proceeded to expose such as were maintained respecting pilgrimages and penances, the intercession and the worship of saints, the abuses of auricular confession, the existence of purgatory, and many other doctrines of the same kind, which have no foundation in Scripture. His arguments made a deep impression upon his hearers, and his fame was soon spread not only through Germany, but various other parts of Europe.

At the same time that by his sermons he was diffusing the principles of the reformation, and his writings contributed materially to the same purpose, nothing

proved more fatal to the interests of the Church of Rome, or more subversive of its opinions, than his translation of the Bible into the German language. The copies of it were rapidly dispersed, and perused with the greatest avidity by persons of all ranks. They were astonished at discovering how contrary the precepts of the great Author of their religion were to the comments and the inventions of those who had so long pretended to be the faithful interpreters of his word. Having now in their own hands the genuine rule of faith, they thought themselves qualified to judge of the established opinions, and to pronounce whether they were conformable to the standard of Scripture, or deviated from it. The great advantages which resulted from this celebrated translation of the Bible encouraged the advocates for the reformation in other countries to follow this example: and by publishing versions in their respective languages they materially promoted the general cause.\*

Luther has been accused by the catholic writers of excessive love of wine, and of the amusements of the field. He indeed much shocked their prejudices by marrying a nun. His followers, however, inform us that he was a man of the strictest temperance, that he drank nothing but water, and that he would occasionally fast two or three days together, and then eat a herring and some bread.†

He had the satisfaction to receive the most important assistance from men of learning and abilities.

\* Robertson's Charles V, vol. ii, p. 113, &c. History of Modern Europe, vol. ii, p. 194, &c. Gilpin's Lives of the Reformers. Burnet's History of the Reformation.

† Seward's Anecdotes, v. i, p. 82, &c. See other anecdotes of him by the pleasing collector, vol. 3, p. 112.

Melancthon, famed for his genius, learning, moderation, and piety, was the author of the confession of Augsburg presented by the Protestants to the emperor Charles V at the diet held in that place. Bucer introduced the doctrines of Luther into the imperial cities upon the Rhine; and Olaus disseminated them with equal zeal in Sweden, his native country. Zuinglius and Calvin, men not inferior to the great Reformer himself in zeal and intrepidity, were active in Switzerland. However they disagreed in their doctrines, and whatever errors marked some of their opinions, they co-operated with the most perfect harmony in the promotion of this great and perilous design. The opposition made by the see of Rome to the divorce of Henry VIII from his queen Catherine, hastened the introduction of the reformed opinions into England. The acute and learned Erasmus was far from being an inconsiderable coadjutor to Luther. His numerous works prepared the way for the reception of the new doctrines. He confuted many of the Romish errors with great weight of argument and force of eloquence. In his satirical writings, likewise, he held up to derision the frauds practised by the monks to impose upon the credulity of the people; and there was scarcely any error, which Luther endeavoured to reform, which had not been treated by Erasmus, either with censure or raillery.\*

The character of Luther was such as exactly qualified him for a reformer, at the particular period when he stood forth as the champion of the Protestant faith.

\* See an excellent account of this accomplished scholar and refined satirist, in Warton on the Genius of Pope, vol. i, p. 187.

His abilities were of the first order, strong by nature, and improved by study. His sanctity of life was conformable to the pure doctrines which he taught. His diligence in detecting the errors of his opponents, and in propagating his own opinions, was ever active and indefatigable. He had an ardour of temper which sometimes broke out into vehemence and impetuosity; the effect of his courage and zeal in the cause of truth. Erasmus said of Luther that God had bestowed upon mankind so violent a physician, in consequence of the magnitude of their diseases. From every instance of opposition his undaunted spirit derived fresh energy: he readily obeyed the summons of the sovereign Pontiff, and stood unmoved before his legate, prepared as he was, not to retract, but to justify his opinions. He afterwards in the presence of numerous spectators burnt the bull of excommunication, which had been issued against him. Conscious of the rectitude of his motives he was bold to assert and prompt to execute his designs. In his controversies he was regardless of the rank or quality of his opponents, and treated Henry VIII with the same opprobrious language, which he used to Tetzels, or Eccius, the ignoble advocates for the see of Rome. Had he been less harsh and severe in his censures, and less vehement in his invectives, he would not have suited the rude manners of the times. Had he addressed his countrymen in a voice of less authority and boldness he would not have awakened them from the lethargy of superstition, in which they were entranced: and if he had been less confident in his own talents, and the goodness of his cause, he would not have spread his opinions with such rapidity, and carried them to such an extent. Unaided by power, and unassisted by force of arms, he shook

the throne of the Popes, and subverted a great part of the vast fabric of their ecclesiastical dominion, which had been raised with consummate art, and whose foundations were deeply laid. This difficult task he accomplished by turning the current of public opinion against it. He imparted to mankind the light of reason and revelation, and enabled them to discern the errors, the frauds, and the usurpations of the see of Rome; and he taught them to vindicate the rights of reason, conscience, and the Gospel. He had the satisfaction to live to see whole provinces and kingdoms adopt his opinions with the highest respect, and subscribe to his decisions with the most implicit deference. He was listened to with that fixed and steady attention, which truth, when accompanied by novelty, is always sure to command. And by an extraordinary instance of divine favour, particularly signal, if we consider the ferocious manners of his contemporaries, and the intolerant spirit of his enemies, he had the happiness to end his life with composure and peace, in his native city, in the midst of his own family. For the invaluable benefits conferred by the great Reformer upon his own age, and upon all posterity, he stands distinguished among the benefactors of the human race, and is entitled to the praise, gratitude, and veneration of mankind.

The opposition which was raised against the opinions of the reformers contributed to produce the effect, which it was the design of their enemies to prevent. Their severe edicts, and even their bloody persecutions, made perhaps as many proselytes to the Protestant faith, as the bold invectives of Luther, the wit and learning of Erasmus, the vehemence of Calvin, and the persuasive mildness of Melancthon. In vain did Henry VIII of England display his polemical skill, and obtain



the title of Defender of the Faith from the Pope, as a reward for his attack on Luther. In vain were repeated diets assembled for the condemnation of his opinions. In vain did the crafty Charles V of Germany enter into an alliance with pope Paul III for the express purpose of extirpating what they stigmatized with the name of heresy. It was to no purpose that the Protestants were forbidden under the most heavy penalties to teach any doctrine contrary to the decrees of the council of Trent. Even the massacre of St. Bartholomew, perpetrated by the sanguinary Charles IX of France, produced no permanent injury to the Protestant cause. And with as little effect did Mary, in a spirit of bigotry, equally cruel and infuriate, commit the holy martyrs of England to the flames. The same consequences ensued which had originally taken place at the first publication of christianity. The rage of persecution tended only to stimulate the curiosity and excite the compassion of mankind; and their inquiries led to the multiplication of converts, wherever the blood of the martyr's was shed.

Many causes led to the success and popularity of the reformed opinions. The schisms in the Church of Rome, the profligate characters of the Popes, and the dissolute lives and intolerant dispositions of the clergy, had made the people disgusted with an establishment, which under the mask of religion, not only encouraged immorality, but granted indulgences for great and flagrant crimes. The recent invention of printing gave a rapid circulation to the writings of the reformers, and particularly to the various versions of the Bible. And the revival of learning conduced to open the minds of men to free inquiry and critical researches. Thus did the peculiar circumstances of the times, and the

favourable conjuncture of various events, unite to crown the labours of Luther with success. Nor must we ever lose sight of *that great cause*, into which all the rest may be resolved, the supreme direction of divine Providence, which at this auspicious period shed the radiant beams of its goodness and truth upon a long-benighted world.

The Reformation not only narrowed the dominions of the sovereign Pontiffs, but obliged them to adopt a different mode of conduct, and to rule by new maxims of policy. Their behaviour was bent to the urgency of the times: from having been long tyrannical and imperious they became condescending, gracious, and mild. Ever since the Reformation they have continued to govern rather by address and management, than by despotic authority; and such has been the great decline of their power that from wielding the sceptre of Europe, and being the arbiters of all its affairs, they have nearly been reduced to a level with the petty princes of Italy and Germany.

One great advantage consequent upon the Reformation has been the improvement not only of its advocates, but even of its enemies, in science, learning, and arts. It was found expedient thus to combat the reformers with their own weapons, and to efface the aspersions which they threw upon the ignorance and licentiousness of the Papists. Hence the attention of the Romish Clergy has been directed to the cultivation of useful and elegant learning, to a degree unknown in former ages; and hence they have become as enlightened and well informed as they were before remarkable for their ignorance.

Similar was the change in their morals: they found it was necessary to silence the clamour of their

enemies by a superior propriety of conduct. The opposers of Luther and Calvin endeavoured to reach the standard, which the reformers, eminent for the purity and even the austerity of their manners, had set up. This amelioration extended to France, to the see of Rome, and to the sovereign Pontiffs themselves. Their love of learning and their moderate use of power have made some atonement to the world for the follies and crimes of their predecessors.

Such have been the beneficial consequences of an event, which, in a political as well as in a religious point of view, is a distinguished object of regard and admiration. The Reformation has vindicated the rights of reason and conscience; it has taught the duty, and diffused the blessings of toleration; and while it has held forth the Scriptures themselves, as the proper and exclusive standard of religious opinions, it has disseminated the genuine principles of christianity, purified the faith, improved the manners, and increased the virtue of mankind.

#### V. THE REVIVAL OF CLASSICAL LEARNING.

Alfred the Great of England, and Charlemagne Emperor of Germany, flourished in the ninth century. These earliest luminaries of the modern world shed a strong and vivid lustre over the age in which they lived. They encouraged learning both by their example and patronage; but their endeavours were not sufficiently effectual to overcome the gross ignorance of their times. The schools which they erected were confined to churches and monasteries; and the contracted notions of the monks who presided over them, partly arising from their recluse modes of life, and

partly from their religious prejudices, rendered them wholly inadequate to the task of diffusing knowledge in any extensive circle. The reign of barbarism and ignorance continued, with little intermission, till the learning which the Arabians had introduced into Spain, began to spread through the rest of Europe. This learning consisted in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, chemistry, and medicine, and the philosophy of Aristotle, in its fullest extent. (See Warton on Pope, vol. i, p. 184.) Several enlightened scholars, who had studied under the Arabians, undertook, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the education of youth, particularly in the cities of Italy, and afterwards in those of France, England, and Germany. To the prevalence and permanency of these branches of knowledge the establishment of the universities of Europe, so general in the thirteenth century, was eminently conducive. Some indeed were founded rather earlier; and Paris and Oxford carry their pretensions to antiquity as high as the reigns of Charlemagne and Alfred: but the real claims of Paris are dated from the time of Philip Augustus, who flourished in the twelfth century. And it would be too heavy a task, even inclined as I may be to support the high antiquity of my own University, if I were required to trace any literary institution for the *regular* maintenance of students upon a *collegiate* plan, to a remoter period than the reign of Edward the first. Merton college was then founded by Walter de Merton, Lord Chancellor of England, and bishop of Rochester, in the year 1264. Upon a careful examination of the pretensions of the first great seminaries of education, the honoured title of Mother of the universities of Europe seems to be due to Bologna. It was within her walls,

during the tumults and disorders of the eleventh century, that learning first attempted to raise her head. In the succeeding age the almost incredible number of 10,000 students was assembled there, and each country in Europe had its resident regents and professors. The studies of the civil and canon law constituted the favourite and almost the exclusive objects of application. Paris directed the attention of her scholars to theology, and nearly with an equal degree of reputation. Oxford began at this time to acquire celebrity, and to rival or rather to surpass the foreign universities in the ability of its professors, and the concourse of its members; for in the year 1340 they amounted, according to the account of the historian Speed, to not less than 30,000. Many other universities were not long after founded, particularly in Italy and France, and were all modelled upon the same plan as Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, with respect to their institutions and studies.

In these seminaries of learning logic and scholastic divinity were for ages the reigning subjects of pursuit. The works of Aristotle were perused with the greatest avidity; and the disquisitions of the commentators upon his Dialectics were so favourably received that their authors almost totally eclipsed the fame of their great master himself. The syllogistic mode of reasoning was applied to every topic, without discrimination, as the best instrument in the hands of a subtle disputant to frame the most specious arguments, and to perplex the plainest truths.

The public schools in the universities were the theatres in which the students acquired and displayed their attainments, as they were filled with a great con-

course of auditors, who daily assembled to listen to the clamorous debates of the several disputants.

Upon the logic of Aristotle was founded the cultivation of scholastic theology and casuistry. To make nice and metaphysical distinctions between one word and another, to separate subjects by infinite divisions, not as the real nature of things, but as fancy suggested, and to draw conclusions which had no moral end whatever, where the incessant pursuits of the schoolmen. The skill, industry, and productions of the spider may serve to illustrate the texture and the flimsiness of their literary labours. The names of Lanfranc, Abelard, Petrus Lombardus, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, are the most eminent among these celebrated disputants. And while an attachment to the ceremonial and ritual observances of the Church of Rome, and the most implicit subserviency to its edicts, and the decrees of its councils, usurped the place of obedience to pure and practical christianity; the bulky volumes of these schoolmen filled every library, and exercised the understanding of every student. And these were the speculations which, however dry in point of style, and unimproving in point of matter, as they were patronized by the dignitaries of the church, and pursued by men of strong and vigorous minds, engrossed for centuries the whole attention of universities, interested courts, and were celebrated in every part of Europe.

In the mean time classical learning was entirely neglected; it was considered as dangerous to true piety, and calculated only to corrupt the pure theology of the Gospel. The poets and orators of Greece and Rome were regarded as the blind guides of erring reason, and as seducers to the paths of sin and destruction. Virgil and Horace were looked upon merely as the ad-

vocates for a profane and idolatrous mythology; and Cicero was regarded as a vain declaimer, impiously elated with the talent of Pagan eloquence. Whenever the minds of the monks were exercised in any literary compositions, to record the marvellous exploits of saints and martyrs, to compose unedifying homilies, and to make frivolous commentaries on Scripture, were the chief and favourite objects of their attention; and that such were their occupations the voluminous manuscripts which form the original parts of most of the oldest libraries in Europe, can abundantly testify.

We discover the first dawns of modern literature in the cultivation of the language of Provence, and the rude productions of the Troubadours. The first of this order, whose name stands recorded, was William Count of Poitou, a nobleman, who distinguished himself by his prowess in the crusades. Many of the men of rank, who embarked in the first expedition to the Holy Land, were of that number. Their romances, composed upon the striking subjects of gallantry, war, satire, and history, first awakened Europe from its ignorance and lethargy, amused the minds of men with grotesque and lively images and descriptions, and first taught them to think, reflect, and judge upon subjects of imagination. The Troubadours occupied the middle place between Gothic ignorance and Italian excellence; and after this period literature is indebted to them for raising the earliest fruits of European genius, and inspiring the moderns with a love of poetry. Their reputation and their language extended far and wide; and every country upon the continent of Europe could boast its itinerant bards. In the courts of kings, and the castles of barons, they were always hailed as the most welcome guests; and their exertions to please

and to instruct were repaid by splendid rewards. The commencement of the crusades, and the close of the fourteenth century, mark the limits of their celebrity. The Romance which had its rise in the manners of chivalry, fell into disrepute as soon as that institution began to decline.

In the fourteenth century men of genius arose in Italy, who resolved to cultivate their native tongue, and to combine with its elegance the charms of imagination, and the acquirements of classical learning. The poetry of the Tuscan school burst forth with a splendour and lustre, which have ever been surveyed with delight and admiration; and the works of Dante, Ariosto, Bocaccio, and Petrarch, although the productions of an age so unpolished, have never yet been excelled by four succeeding centuries of the best efforts of genius and learning.

After the philosophy of Aristotle and the commentaries of the schoolmen had contributed for a considerable period to give a wrong direction to the faculties of the mind, and to occupy the time and attention of scholars; a series of events occurred in the fifteenth century, which turned the minds of ingenious men to new researches, opened the way to the revival of classical learning, and the improvement of all the arts and sciences connected with its cultivation.

The subversion of the Roman Empire in the East, and the discovery of the art of printing, happened nearly at the same period of time. Learned men had long trembled at the approach, and at length fled before the fierce aspect of Mahomet the second. After Constantinople was taken by the Turks in the year 1453, Chrysoloras, Demetrius Chalcondyles, Johannes Andronicus, Callistus Constantius, Johannes Lascaris,



Gaza of Thessalonica, and many other learned Greeks, whose names must ever be recorded with honour in the annals of literature, fled into Italy for shelter and protection. That country, in consequence of having always preserved a greater degree of refinement and knowledge than the rest of Europe, was happily calculated for their favourable reception. They found in particular at Florence several Greek professors, who had been induced, by the liberality of Cosmo de Medici, a great patron of learning, to settle in that city. Into Italy they conveyed, and there they interpreted, the inestimable works of their ancient writers, which had been preserved in the metropolis of the East. They were eagerly followed by the best Italian scholars, who quickly imbibed a taste for the graces of genuine poetry, eloquence, and history. A more useful and sublime philosophy was soon adopted; and the scholastic subtleties of logic, and the empty speculations of metaphysics, were gradually superseded by the useful principles of moral philosophy, the maxims of sound criticism, and the acquisitions of elegant learning.

The patronage of the Popes gave splendour and importance to this new kind of erudition. Considering its encouragement as an excellent expedient to establish their authority, such was their liberality to scholars, that the court of Rome on a sudden changed its austere character, and became the seat of elegance and urbanity. Nicholas the fifth, about the year 1440, offered public rewards at Rome for compositions in the learned languages, appointed professors in the Belles Lettres, and employed intelligent persons to traverse all parts of Europe in search of the classic

manuscripts, which were concealed in the libraries of monasteries.

But see each Muse in Leo's golden days  
Starts from her trance, and trims her withered bays;  
Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread,  
Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

Leo the tenth was conspicuous for his ardour and munificence in the cause of literature: it is very remarkable, that while he was pouring the thunder of his anathemas against the new doctrines of Luther, he published a bull of excommunication against all those who should dare to censure the poems of Ariosto. And it was during his pontificate that a perpetual indulgence was granted for rebuilding the church of a monastery, because it possessed a manuscript of Tacitus. In the exercise of these new studies the Italian ecclesiastics were the first and the most numerous. Countenanced by the authority of the sovereign pontiff, they abandoned the intricacies of a dry and barbarous theology, and studied the purest models of antiquity.

No sooner had Italy, under these auspices, banished the Gothic style in eloquence and poetry, than painting, sculpture, and architecture arrived at maturity, and shone in all their original splendour. The beautiful and sublime ideas which the Italian artists had conceived from the contemplation of ancient statues and temples, were invigorated by the descriptions of Homer and Sophocles. Petrarch was crowned at Rome in the capitol, and Raphael was promoted to the dignity of a cardinal.

These improvements were soon received in other countries, and spread their influence over France

England, Spain, and Hungary. The Greek tongue was introduced into England by William Grocyn: he was a fellow of New College, Oxford, and died about the year 1520. To Germany must be allowed a very large and distinguished share in the restitution of letters. And the mechanical genius of Holland added, at an auspicious moment to all the fortunate events in favour of science, an admirable invention; for to that country the world was indebted for the discovery of the art of PRINTING: The honour of having given rise to this art has been claimed by the cities of Haerlem, Mentz, and Strasburgh. To each of these it may be attributed in a qualified sense, as within a short space of time they respectively contributed to its advancement. But the original inventor was Laurentius John Coster of Haerlem, who made his first essay with wooden types about the year 1439. The art was communicated by his servant to John Faust and John Guttemburg of Mentz. It was carried to perfection by Peter Schoeffer, the son-in-law of Faustus, who invented the modes of casting metal types, and was probably the first who used them in printing.\* The most popular of those very ingenious mechanics

\* Trihemius, in his Chronicle, written A. D. 1514, says he had it from the mouth of Peter Schoeffer, that the first book they printed with moveable types was the Bible, about the year 1450, in which the expenses were so enormous as to have cost 4000 florins before they had printed 12 sheets. The author of a MS. Chronicle of Cologne, compiled in 1499, also says, that he was told by Ulric Zell of Cologne (who himself introduced printing there in 1466) that the Latin Bible was first begun to be printed in the year of Jubilee 1450, and that it was in large character. *Scriptura grandiori quali hodie missalia solent imprimi.* Mr. Edwards of Pall Mall possessed a copy of this curious Bible, 3 vol. bound in Morocco. In his catalogue it was valued at 126*l.* There is a beautiful copy of this work, 2 vol. fol. in the Bodleian Library.

was Faust, who is reported to have carried a number of his Bibles to Paris; and when he offered them to sale as manuscripts, the French, considering the number of the books, and their exact resemblance to each other, without the variation even of a letter or a stop, and that the best transcribers could not possibly be so exact in their most accurate copies, concluded he must have derived assistance from some supernatural agent. Either by actually prosecuting him as a magician, or threatening to do so, they extorted from him the curious secret of his new invention; and it is probable that from this circumstance arose the marvellous stories which are related of Dr. Faustus.

The art of printing was soon spread throughout a great part of Europe. It passed to Rome in 1466, and the Roman type was in a short time brought to great perfection. Thomas Bouchier Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry VI sent Caxton, a person remarkable in that age for cultivating learning amid the occupations of commerce, to Haerlem, to gain a knowledge of this invention; and "the first book which Caxton printed was an English translation of Recuyel, or the History of Troy, in 1471, in Flanders. The first book known to have been printed in England by him was a translation from the French of *the Game of Chess*, 1474, with fusil metal types. For though Frederick Corselli, a Dutchman or German, is said to have printed at Oxford in 1468, *Sancti Hieronymi Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, it has been doubted whether there ever was a printer of that name in England; and if there was, his book was printed with separate wooden types." See the Norfolk Tour, p. 120. At the close of the sixteenth century various editions of books in Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, and Coptic

characters, were published. This admirable discovery was made at a period the most favourable to its reception and improvement. Not only a taste for polite learning began, as we have before remarked, to be fashionable in the fifteenth century, but many persons of the first rank in several parts of Europe, and particularly in Italy, distinguished themselves by their love of letters, and their patronage of eminent scholars. Many public libraries were about this time erected in the great cities of Europe, and were furnished with manuscripts of ancient authors, purchased at a great expense; but from the care with which they were guarded, their perusal was confined to a small number of readers. No invention therefore could be more fortunate, or more likely to gratify the general curiosity, than that by which copies of the same work were easily and expeditiously multiplied, sold at a reasonable rate, and circulated throughout every part of the civilized world.

This art would have been comparatively of small value a century or two before, when the grossest ignorance prevailed, and even persons of high birth and distinction were extremely illiterate, and of course not disposed to give encouragement to the revival of learning. On the contrary, the people of the fifteenth century were highly gratified by the discovery of an art so congenial to their taste, and therefore stimulated the ingenuity of its inventors to carry it to a high degree of perfection. Of this encouragement and improvement sufficient proofs are now extant; for many of the books which were printed at this early period may be compared, with respect to the blackness of the ink, the elegance of the type, and the excellence

of the paper, to most of the copies which are at this time the boast of the English or foreign presses.

Thus, as books were multiplied, a taste for reading became more general. And it is very remarkable that the reformation of religion, and the revival of classical learning, were reciprocally advantageous; they reflected mutual light, and afforded mutual assistance. The ecclesiastics, when books were placed within the common reach, could no longer confine the languages or the writers of antiquity to themselves; and men were eager to acquire that knowledge which had been so long concealed. They imagined the mines of antiquity to be very rich; and they were not disappointed; for as soon as they were enabled to explore their treasures, they found them answer their most sanguine expectations. Warton's *English Poetry*, vol. iii, p. 491. vol. ii, p. 54, &c.

As the dawn of the Reformation in England was obscured by the bigotry of the sanguinary Mary, so were there few circumstances in her fanatical reign propitious to the growth of polite erudition. It is however a pleasing circumstance to be able to select an event from the calamitous history of her times, which happily concurred with some preceding establishments, to diffuse classical knowledge, and which does honour to the founder of a *Society*, which among the statesmen, poets, and scholars, enrolled in its lists, records the names of SOMERS, CHATHAM, MERRICK, WARTON, BENWELL, and BOWLES. In the year 1554, Trinity College in Oxford was founded by Sir Thomas Pope; who in the constitution of this Society principally inculcates the use and necessity of classical literature; and recommends it as the most important and leading object in his system of academical study.

Queen Mary was herself eminently learned: at the desire of Queen Catherine Parr she translated in her youth Erasmus's Paraphrase on St. John; the preface is written by Udall, master of Eton school; in which he much extols her distinguished proficiency in literature. It would have been fortunate if Mary's attention to this work had softened her temper, and enlightened her understanding. She frequently spoke in public with propriety, and always with prudence and dignity. Warton's English Poetry, vol. iii.

In the subsequent reign of Elizabeth an accurate acquaintance with the phrases, and all the peculiarities of the ancient poets, historians, and orators, was made an indispensable and almost the principal object in the education, not only of a gentleman, but even of a lady. Among the females of high distinction, who aspired to the reputation of classical scholars, the Queen herself, and the beautiful and unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, were the most conspicuous. Roger Ascham, their learned preceptor, speaks in raptures of the progress, which they both made in the Greek and Latin authors, and relates some pleasing anecdotes of their application to this study.\* This pedantic fashion appeared in many ludicrous extravagancies. It was conspicuous in various publications, in the shows and pageants exhibited during the progress of the Queen through different parts of her dominions, and in the entertainments held in her honour, wherein emblems allusive to classical mythology were constantly introduced.

But the pedantry which gave so deep a tinge to the fashion of those times had little effect upon the pro-

\* Ascham. Epist. lib. ii, p. 18, Edit. 1591, &c. Warton's *Life of Pope*, p. 93, &c.

ductions of Shakspeare. Raised by the power of original and daring genius he bent the information of former ages to his own purposes. His works, like those of Milton, were for a time neglected: but since the close of the seventeenth century they have been held in the highest estimation, and have contributed, perhaps more than any others of our national compositions, to diffuse a relish for books. That relish was first excited by the numerous translations of the Greek and Roman authors, and of Italian tales into English, in the reign of Elizabeth. The works of the writers who flourished in the time of Queen Anne, particularly Addison, Swift, and Dryden, divested learning of its stiffness, revived a just taste for the classics, and had great influence in making the perusal of books a popular amusement. Since that period we may fairly be called a nation of readers. Books of all kinds have been produced, and the *press* has supplied the means of multiplying them to a degree which exceeds the power of calculation. Let us consider what the press has effected, and what it may still produce for the advantage, the instruction, and delight of mankind. Its benefits are as extensive as they are various; it is of the highest importance to mankind. It is the safeguard of liberty in every free country. It is the ally of religion, when it supplies the world with the productions of the learned and pious; who labour to disseminate the precepts of genuine christianity. It furnishes the means of rational improvement, and amusement in the hours of sickness and leisure, communicates instruction to the young, and entertainment to the old, and spreads these enjoyments far and wide before every people of the globe. We have therefore sufficient reason to congratulate ourselves on being born at a



- time, in which we are rescued from the gross ignorance which enveloped our ancestors; when the light of pure religion and useful knowledge is diffused around us; and when, provided that our moral improvements keep pace, in a due degree, with our intellectual proficiency, we may be virtuous, as well as enlightened and intelligent, beyond the example of former ages.

#### CONCLUSION.

Such are some of the most striking points upon which the student will fix his eye, in his wide and pleasing survey of modern history. There are many others which are entitled to his observation; and he cannot fail to notice with particular regard the era marked by the invention of the mariner's compass, and all the consequent improvements in navigation. From that period the sailor became more confident and more adventurous: he scorned to coast along the shore, and boldly steered his vessel into the wide and open ocean. He discovered new islands, and even new continents, established a free intercourse with the most remote quarters of the globe, imparted to distant nations the advantages of commerce, and pointed out to the Europeans a boundless scope for the 'plantation of colonies in Asia, Africa, and America.

In tracing the progress of navigation from the confined limits of the Mediterranean and the Baltic shores, to its present extent in the northern and southern hemispheres, we observe upon the map of the globe the tracts of those renowned navigators, Christopher Columbus, Vasco de Gama, and Sebastian Cabot; and we follow with a more lively curiosity, and national

pride, the courses of Drake, Raleigh, Anson, Byron, Carteret, and Cooke.

The discovery of gunpowder is remarkable, as its introduction into the military art has changed the mode of waging war, and lessened its destructive ravages. The invention of the telescope was an important acquisition to science, as it has served to verify the theories, and establish the reasonings of modern astronomers, and thus gives them a decided advantage over those, who in ancient times cultivated the same science. The invention likewise of the air-pump by Boyle, the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, the establishment of the Copernican system, the experiment of Torricelli, by which he ascertained the weight of the atmosphere, and the numerous improvements in various arts and sciences, contribute to do honour to modern times. They compose such an assemblage of luminous objects as cannot fail to attract for all ages the curiosity and admiration of mankind.

These pleasing branches of study may lead us to form a just estimate of political affairs, and of the subjects which tend to the moral improvement of the mind. Modern history affords many examples of the prowess of conquerors who have desolated the world, and of hypocrites who have deceived it. And yet we may fairly ask, of what benefit to society were the impostures of Mahomet, the victories of Clovis, Charlemagne, Gengis Khan, and Tamerlane; the invasion of William the Conqueror, the political cunning of Charles the fifth, the ambition of Philip the second, and the intriguing spirit of Richelieu and Mazarine? Their empires, triumphs, conquests, and projects, have left little impression behind them, notwithstanding the attention they once attracted, and the violent

convulsions which they caused in the state of the world. The mind is refreshed, and turns with delight to more pacific scenes, to trace the discoveries of Columbus and Vasco de Gama, and the beneficial change in religious opinions, which Luther and Calvin produced. We consider with more satisfaction than the recital of battles and sieges can afford, the mild and benevolent spirit of colonization, which actuated the exertions of William Penn; the sublime philosophy of Bacon, Newton, and Locke; and the matchless poetry of Shakespeare, Milton, and Tasso. These have a more beneficial influence in enlarging our knowledge, and satisfying our curiosity, than the most intimate acquaintance with the conquests of the ambitious, and the machinations of the politic. The works of war and heroism are too often destructive in their operations, and disastrous in their consequences; and the closer they are examined, the more they wound our feelings, by the calamities they have produced. They may furnish indeed very instructive lessons of caution, if the rulers of mankind imitate the conduct of prudent mariners, who remark the situation of rocks and shoals, only from a design to avoid them. How much fairer and more inviting is the prospect of the works of genius, science, arts, and commerce! They charm our attention the longer they are surveyed; and the more intimately we are acquainted with them, the greater is our pleasure, as well as our improvement.

Thus have we seen that the arts and sciences have kept pace with the progress of manners and religion, in adorning and exalting the human mind; and thus has their united light dispelled the shades of ignorance and barbarism. The intellectual powers, after ages of depression, have surmounted all obstacles, and operated

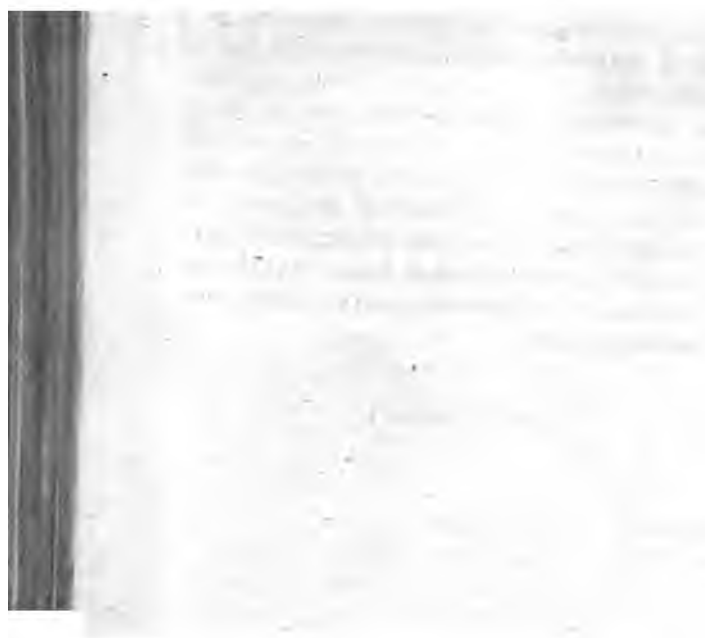
through every channel of knowledge; and perhaps it is not arrogating too much superiority to assert, that the glory even of ancient Greece and Rome has been surpassed by the talents and diligence of modern Europeans, in the cultivation of whatever can instruct and improve society.

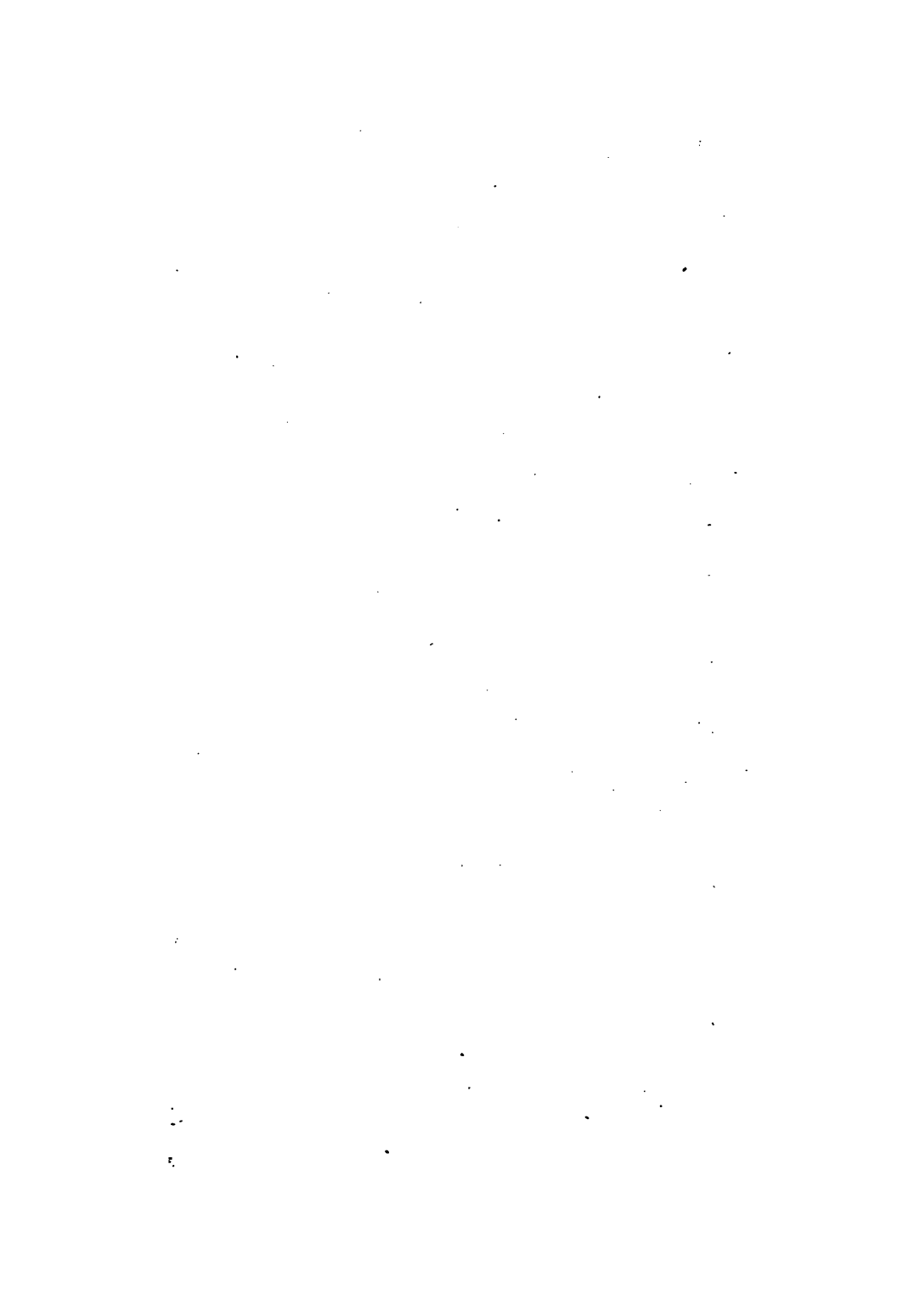
This interesting part of history displays to us a variety of discoveries, events, improvements, and institutions, which have contributed, in their aggregate effects, to *raise the character of man above its former level*, to encourage industry, and diversify its pursuits; to call forth the powers of the mind to every *laudable exertion*, to cherish *all the virtues* of the heart, and make human existence *more valuable*, by INCREASING THE GENERAL STOCK OF MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT, AND PROMOTING SOCIAL ORDER, COMFORT, AND HAPPINESS.

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